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RECONTEXTUALISATION OF THE *DÙNDÚN* DRUMMING TRADITION
IN HAMPSHIRE

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS

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RECONTEXTUALISATION OF THE *DÙNDÚN* DRUMMING TRADITION IN HAMPSHIRE

By Dennis Oluremi Oladehinde Eluyefa

This project will be using an Action Research methodology to reflect on my own practice as a *dùndún* practitioner. It examines the roots of my practice in the traditions of the *dùndún* in the Yorùbá tradition in Nigeria – both from oral and literary sources – and in my experiences in Hungary. It concentrates on my work in Hampshire where I worked in a number of different contexts. It examines in detail two case studies in which I attempted to recontextualise the *dùndún* in two separate institutions – church and prison. These will be examined and analysed using the frames of post-colonial theory and Foucauldian social constructionism. Five concepts arise from these analyses which permeate the thesis: ‘cultural dialogue, understanding and integration’; ‘representation and presentation of culture and notions of identity’; ‘tradition, authenticity and originality’; ‘construction of meanings’ and ‘empowerment’.

An important thread in this thesis on reflexive practice in the area of recontextualisation is the part the *dùndún* plays in identity construction, contrasting Yorùbá with European practice. The conclusions reflect the complexity of the processes involved in recontextualisation, especially the role of gatekeepers, the place of plurality in value systems in openness to change, the role experience plays in approaching new contexts, the complexity of the issues involved in cultural dialogue, the different types of power found in the various contexts and the relationship between tradition, authenticity and originality in various cultures. It analyses how my own practice has been influenced by these case studies.

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The pictures in the table of figures are placed in the end of each chapter and I have made reference to them where necessary in all the chapters.

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Dennis Oluremi Oladehinde Eluyefa, declare that the thesis entitled

Recontextualisation of the *Dùndún* Drumming Tradition in Hampshire

and the work presented in the thesis are my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
- Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
- Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- None of this work has been published before submission, but part of it has been presented as a conference paper in the USA.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my departed mother, Olori Elizabeth Bamikeye Adunni Eluyefa, who left this sinful world to join her ancestors on 8th November 2008 while I was in Hungary. As a result of the unfairness levied against her, which resulted in her children not to receive proper education, I promised her before I left Nigeria in 1996 that I would study till I get a doctorate degree to remove any reproaches and also to prove all the critics wrong who had thought nothing good could come out of her 'Jerusalem'. Although she is gone, I believe she watches me all the time and she has guided me through this thesis despite the ups and downs that I went through. May her gentle soul continue to rest in perfect peace, Àsẹ ẹ ẹ ẹ ẹ.

I would also like to dedicate this thesis to my dearest son, Prince Dennis Adetokunbo Eluyefa, who had to be without me for most of the time in Hungary as a result of my research. He has coped amazingly with all the upheaval my return to study has brought us all. He is the light of my life and I am so proud of him.

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Chapter One

Introduction to the study

1.1. Introduction

I am a practitioner in the performing arts. This study examines part of my journey as a performing artist – the attempt to recontextualise the *dùndún* tradition in two contexts in Hampshire. For this I shall be adopting the stance of a reflective practitioner. I shall use aspects of Action Research methodology as I am putting my own practice and its development at the centre of my study.

My motivation for undertaking research for this thesis lies in the struggle for affirmation of a part of my identity that is constructed around the *dùndún*, a Yorùbá musical instrument commonly called the ‘talking drum’. In Yorùbá culture, an object such as a drum can form part of someone’s identity. As a profession, the *dùndún* drumming families are known through the prefix Àyàn they carry in their names. This is because “Àyàn is believed by all Yorùbá to be the father of the art of drumming” (Olaniyan, 1993:54). I am not from a *dùndún* drumming family. However, I developed such an intimate relationship with the *dùndún* drum through usage that it has become part of my identity.

As part of this investigation, I attempted to play the *dùndún* and share my cultural practice in two churches in Hampshire, but the idea was rejected resulting in marginalisation. This brings to mind memories of the Yorùbá attempting to play the *dùndún* in the missionary churches during the colonial time. In order to analyse what happened in the two churches in Hampshire, I will use post-colonial theory as an analytical tool, drawing on aspects of the hourglass model by Pavis (1992) and Gikandi’s (2000) distinction between post-colonialism and neo-colonialism. The other case study took place in a prison in Hampshire where I was

able to engage the prison inhabitants in a number of workshops, enabling me to present the *dùndún* as part of my identity. One of the things that the *dùndún* connotes in the Yorùbá musical culture is power¹. Foucauldian social constructionism, which is about cultural power, will be used as an analytical tool for this case study. As a practitioner at the centre of this investigation, my experience is central in the analysis of the two case studies.

1.2. My identity with the *dùndún*

My involvement with Yorùbá drums is arguably the common experience of many youngsters for whom the sounds of drums meant more than simple curiosity. The sounds of the drums are musical *voices* calibrated in the course of playing and through the specific touch of the drummers to communicate the timbre, tonality and resonance of individuals, groups, cultural and ritual practices. As this study progressed, I realised that this early encounter became a central part of my developing identity.

My exposure to the *dùndún* drumming tradition started at the tender age of five following masquerades and attending festivals in the community, of which the principal musical instruments were usually a set of the *dùndún* drums. Throughout my primary and secondary education, I have played *gáangan* (a smaller size *dùndún* drum) at schools and church choirs. Professionally, I have played with the Nigerian Navy Band 3 and Sir Oladiran and His Best Organisation, both in Lagos. I also played with Sir Akin and His Jùjú Dance Band, in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria.

I worked as an actor and a choreographer at the Ondo State Arts Council for six years after I had previously worked with Hubert Ogunde, the acclaimed father and founder of Nigerian

¹ This will be discussed in Chapter Two.

contemporary theatre (Clark, 1979) for another six years. I actively engaged with the *dùndún* throughout this period. During my six year spell at the Ondo State Arts Council, I founded my own private troupe, AfrOriginal Dance Troupe and the *dùndún* drums were our main musical instruments. In 1996, I left Nigeria for Europe with my troupe. I wanted to expand the contexts of my performance. The former Yugoslavia was our first stop where we worked in a circus company.

In Yugoslavia, playing the *dùndún* and its associated repertoire of drama, dance, storytelling and song within the European conventional circus practice paved the way for cultural dialogue and integration, though at a limited level. After a period of time, I moved and settled down in Budapest, Hungary and continued with my cultural practices.

I came to the University of Winchester to study for a Masters Degree in Performing Arts in 2003, but I soon became the new director of African Drumming Ensemble (ADE), one of the many ensembles that make up Foundation Music, a music making voluntary organisation for staff and students. ADE was culturally integrated; its members consisted of students from different countries including Britain, South Africa, Japan, Tanzania, Germany, USA, Nigeria, Ghana, Sweden, etc. As the director, I soon found myself in a very peculiar situation of being a postgraduate student, drumming tutor and culture bearer.

When I was invited to become the Director of African Drumming Ensemble, I also asked what type of drums the ensemble had. The answer was ‘we have African drums’. However, I soon found out that the ensemble consisted of *djembe*, a large goblet drum made of wood and covered with membrane on one side. The *djembe* drums are usually played with bare hands. What I found was that before my arrival as a *dùndún* practitioner, the University had already

constructed an African musical identity around the *djembe* drums. I began to see that the process of being a practitioner even in this context might be more complex than I had imagined. A notion of African musical identity had already been defined and it did not include the notion of the diversity of drumming traditions found in the whole continent.

It is believed that *djembe* is an integral part of the Mande's musical tradition and culture (Duran, 1995). Mande languages are spoken in Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Mali, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire. It is most likely then that the *djembe* can be found in these countries. I am a Yorùbá man from Nigeria; the *djembe* does not form part of my musical identity. I came across and actually played it for the first time in Hungary in 1996. Since then I have mastered the drum in terms of usage. All this can still be viewed as an almost inevitable result of the process of my education and encounter with drums.

Through the University of Winchester, I met 'Drum4Fun' in 2004; it is one of many such organisations in the UK that organise community drumming circles and the *djembes* are their main instruments. At the time of writing this thesis, 'Drum4Fun' has more than four hundred *djembes*. As a black African practitioner, I became the workshop facilitator for 'Drum4Fun' and together we did many workshops in schools, colleges and corporate companies, mostly in Hampshire.

When I first started working with 'Drum4Fun', my initial thought was to facilitate the workshops as I would have done with people of the same musical conventions. A good number of the workshop participants were not interested in the context in which the drums

were played in Africa. They viewed the drums as disembodied artefacts rather than as the modes of communication and cognition in which history, drama, and narrative are integrated.

Furthermore, the 'Drum4Fun' organisation had particular personal goals (fun) in mind, these acted as lenses through which participants saw the drums. The drums were simply there to satisfy a variety of purposes – de-stressing, increasing self-esteem, confidence building, team building, relaxation, motivation, etc, which were to be accessed by having fun with the drums. Although these are also present within African drumming traditions, they are not central. A leaflet had already shaped the expectations of the participants as the drums were used mainly for new purposes in a new culture. The meaning of the act of playing the drum had been changed from that in the original culture.

At my first workshop, I was absolutely amazed to see many English people playing 'African rhythms' on the *djembe*. Firstly, I had not imagined non-Africans playing the drum with passion. Secondly, I was not expecting people, who were not enculturated into societies where the playing of the *djembe* had started, to have the skills to play the drum at that level. My preconceptions of the rhythmic skills of non-Africans on the drum were challenged. These preconceptions were due to the colonial literature from which I learnt at school that rhythms were for the Africans and melodies are for Europeans. However, whilst some people were finding it extremely difficult to keep the rhythm, those who had taken part in many drumming circles before just relaxed, and flowed with the exercise. I learnt that most people could hold basic rhythms and therefore that at an elementary level the *djembe* was an instrument accessible to many people.

My involvement in the recontextualisation of the *djembe* with ‘Drum4Fun’ helped build my confidence, enabling a discourse about the *dùndún* and its place in Yorùbá musical culture in Nigeria. I was surprised and pleased at the huge amount of interest that it generated – much more than I had imagined. And so once again, my preconceptions of Europeans’ engagement and utilisation of African drums were challenged as I was challenged by the enthusiasm of the participants and the need to re-assess my own prejudices about the way ideas move from one culture to another.

In April 2005, the director of ‘Drum4Fun’ presented a ‘talking drum’ made in Mali to me as a birthday gift. However, I questioned what it meant, not because it was made in Mali, but because it was ‘deaf’ and ‘dumb’. What I mean by this is that the drum did not ‘talk’ clearly and eloquently as its name suggests it should. This was no sign of cultural snobbery but in my value system a drum that cannot talk cannot be a ‘talking drum’. It has lost its values because it cannot fulfil its fundamental function. I will discuss the underpinning factors of a drum as ‘talking drum’ fully in Chapter Two, some of which were not present in the one I was given. For the person who gave me the drum the value system lay in the appearance of the drum, but for me it lay in its capacity to speak.

These are the background facts that made me turn my attention to the Yorùbá *dùndún* (talking drum) drumming tradition. So, I undertook this research to investigate what actually happened when I attempted to play the *dùndún* in two very different situations – two churches and a prison in Hampshire.

A question formed in my mind: Would the recontextualisation of the *dùndún* and the transformation of its mythological roots travel and, more importantly follow the same pattern

that was apparent in the recontextualisation of the *djembe*? The intention was not to make the *dùndún* compete with the *djembe* as they are different in many respects. My intention as a practitioner was concerned with how people might receive my performances using the *dùndún* drumming traditions in Hampshire and what might happen to the tradition when it is recontextualised. In doing that, I was investigating whether they would accept me as someone whose identity is constructed around the drum and its musical tradition. Thus, the main research questions for this investigation became: What analytical issues arose out of my work as a practitioner in these new contexts, which involved the recontextualisation of the *dùndún* drumming tradition in Hampshire? How would it inform my practice?

Other questions that arose are: Can the *dùndún* foster cultural understanding between the audience and me? How will notions of identity be defined in relation to the *dùndún* drumming tradition? How will the power relations play out between the two different value systems of Yorùbá and British cultures? How will tradition, authenticity and originality be defined in the context of a drum taken away from its culture? These questions have been formulated in the following five concepts that emerged and ran through this thesis.

- Cultural dialogue, understanding and integration
- Representation and presentation of culture and notions of identity
- Tradition, authenticity and originality
- Construction of meanings
- Empowerment

The in-depth exploration of the concepts will be done later, but first below are the aims and scope of this investigation.

1.3. The aims and scope of the study

The aim of this investigation is to present my practice as a *dùndún* practitioner and analyse the experience of this and that of the participants through self-reflection. This thesis will examine my experience of this. And because of my realization of the centrality of my practice to my identity, the issue that emerged was one of inclusion or exclusion – how far were specific parts of Hampshire able to include me as a *dùndún* practitioner? How far could the *dùndún*, with its associated values and meanings, be accepted? What changes occurred in the process of acceptance or rejection by a culture which had once been the instigator of a process of colonialism?

This investigation will examine the relation between meaning and context in relation to me as a *dùndún* practitioner. This will be explored primarily by means of participant observation with a focus on ‘reflection’ and ‘participation’. This study will look into and identify moments of ‘stasis’ and ‘change’ in the course of my practice in the Yorùbá *dùndún* drumming tradition. It will also interrogate the extent the *dùndún* and I demonstrate flexibility in the face of new times, places, interpretations and musical metaphors. The breakdown of the chapters is as follows.

Chapter Two: *The Dùndún in the Traditional Context* is the literature review about the *dùndún* both in oral and literary traditions. It looks into the historical origin of the *dùndún* as well as its original context in the Yorùbá culture, the value and belief system associated with the *dùndún*, which includes the tradition of constructing identity around the drum. It gives ethnographic accounts of the *dùndún* from the point of view of a Yorùbá man and practitioner. This chapter also examines the relationship between the *dùndún* and other Yorùbá traditional drums, and its position amongst the practitioners and other Yorùbá

musical instruments. Furthermore, the chapter looks at the various techniques for playing the *dùndún* drums and the sources of texts for the *dùndún* practitioners.

Chapter Three: *The Methodology* looks at the underpinning methodology which is based on an application of Action Research. An Action Research methodology grew up in the context of the development of the reflective practitioner in education: “the systematic study of attempts to change and improve educational practice by groups of participants [teachers] by means of their own practical actions and by means of their own reflection upon the effects of those actions” (Ebbutt, 1985:156). Thus, it can be viewed as research oriented towards the enhancement of the practice of teaching.

I am using an Action Research methodology to focus on my practice as a *dùndún* practitioner in relation to *others*, reflecting on my experience of sharing my musical traditions with participants both in the church and prison contexts within Hampshire. The chapter explains the use of this qualitative methodology. It further examines various strategies that are explored in the gathering of material largely by means of participant observation as well as the reflection on the data.

Chapter Four: *The Dùndún in the Church Context in Hampshire* is the first of the two case studies, which took place in two churches in Hampshire. I wanted to operate as a *dùndún* practitioner in these churches drawing on my previous experience in churches in Nigeria and Hungary. The two churches in Hampshire were contrasted. I had hoped and anticipated that at least one of the churches with a large number of Nigerians (many of whom were Yorùbá) in the congregation would be a source of empowerment for me. Hence, my expectations of the

effects of the recontextualisation of the *dùndún* were very high. The chapter analyses the reasons why these were not realised.

The attitude of the two churches towards the *dùndún* and my identity that was constructed around it paralleled that of the colonial missionaries towards the Yorùbá converts and the *dùndún* practitioners who wanted to take the *dùndún* drumming tradition to the missionary churches. Drawing and reflecting on the effects of colonialism, I employ post-colonial theory as a theoretical tool for the analysis of this case study.

Chapter Five: *The Dùndún in the Prison Context* is the last of the two case studies. It focuses on a number of workshops that took place at Her Majesty's Prison, Kingston in Portsmouth. This is the only area in which I have no previous experience of recontextualising the *dùndún*, but I based my aims on the general effects of the *dùndún* drumming tradition on the practitioners and listeners in Nigeria and Hungary. Though the drumming profession is socially constructed as an act of begging in the Yorùbá culture, the embedded values in the *dùndún* have made the practitioners gain power within the Yorùbá musical culture. I will discuss this fully in Chapter Two.

In HMP Kingston, I operated as a *dùndún* practitioner in a radically different context where freedom had been systemically removed from the inhabitants. I therefore employ social constructionism, originating in the work of Michel Foucault, to analyse this case study. It will be used to interrogate the issue of powerlessness in the lives of the prison inhabitants. I then employ the *dùndún* within a restorative justice paradigm as an empowering instrument for the purpose of confidence-boosting and increasing self-esteem in the lives of the people living in the prison.

Chapter Six: *Conclusion* reflects on how far the experiences examined in depth in the two case studies have affected my understanding of my own practice when it is placed in different contexts. It will examine this through the lenses of the selected key concepts. It will also reflect on the function of the *dùndún*, as it operates in contexts removed from its cultural roots.

1.4. Recontextualisation

Generally, recontextualisation means to put something in a context different from its original one. Strategies for doing this include either devising new structures or adapting the old ones to suit the present purpose. New ideas emerge and new paradigms are created. As a *dùndún* practitioner who has moved into a different culture from the one in which he was brought up, my performances represent a recontextualisation of the *dùndún*. For the purpose of this thesis, I shall be examining the elements within this process of recontextualisation, including the possibility that shifts in context necessarily evoke changes of meaning. Nketia refers to context as “any setting or environment – be it physical, ecological, social, cultural or intellectual – in which an entity or a unit of experience is viewed in order to define its identity” (Nketia, 1990:81).

This thesis is concerned with all the aspects to which Nketia refers – the physical, ecological, social, cultural and intellectual aspects, all of which affected my identity as a practitioner. I shall describe the process of playing or attempting to play the *dùndún* in two contexts and then analyse what emerged from this, using the five concepts, which will be examined later in this chapter. Nketia (1990) defines contextualisation as the process of viewing those entities in a context in terms of their internal and external relations and relevance. Once a product

(particularly an artistic one) is taken out of context, such a product is viewed, appreciated and evaluated differently. A shift of context is also a shift in meanings.

1.4.1. Some paradigms for recontextualisation

Recontextualisation can be seen as part of a human struggle as humans have always had to adapt to a change in their circumstances. Thus, it is a way in which human beings respond to, adjust and make themselves fit into their environment. Recontextualisation can take place both at micro and macro levels. At a micro level, this can take place within a culture.

However, the further the artists move away from home, the more they engage in the process of recontextualisation at a macro level. The urban culture can offer a variety of possibilities both positive and negative for the musicians (Mayer, 1961). The profession is always more competitive in the cities than in the villages. This is because the musical systems in the cities always include dominant and counter styles and performance roles.

Recontextualisation can also take place within the same culture for commercial, tourist, educational and research purposes. Tourism especially has contributed immensely to the recontextualisation of much traditional music across the globe (see Johnson, 2002 on Balinese music). Traditional music played for tourism purposes has its own uniqueness as it takes the interest of the tourists into consideration. As a result, music for the tourists is the recontextualised form of the traditional music and it will need to be appreciated in that context. This initially results in a change of meaning.

Shortly after independence, many African countries revitalised their artistic products and established state owned troupes to promote their cultures abroad. This initiative brought material of the colonised such as the *dùndún* that was previously suppressed by the

colonisers, back and put it into the international artistic arena. This becomes accessible to the wider world as the music is “consumed within globalised culture” (Johnson, 2002:8). This initiative deconstructs colonialism as well as restoring the identity and pride of the colonised.

Within the national boundaries, the initiative also promotes unity, intercultural dependency and a group identity for the nation. Nketia explains:

There is the current process of intercultural dependency being created in Africa today by national governments within the framework of their programs for national integration and national unity which aim at establishing consciousness of a new national cultural identity based on the heritage of the ethnic groups within their national boundaries (Nketia, 1986: 41).

In a country such as Nigeria, the formation of a ‘Nation Dance Troupe’ unites various ethnic groups in the country. It promotes cultural understanding and cooperation through artistic and cultural exchange both at national and international levels.

There were also a number of privately owned troupes e.g. my AfrOriginal Dance Troupe. They brought artists from different cultural backgrounds together with the aim of promoting their cultures abroad. These troupes represented in their performances their own African identity. However, they also had to have a concern for the way in which that identity might be perceived by an audience.

From time to time many scholars have tried to make sense out of various things by putting many artistic products in different contexts, e.g. traditional material in contemporary contexts and vice versa for a variety of reasons.² Thus, recontextualisation seeks to convert and/or adapt the knowledge extracted from one context to allow it to be appropriately used within another. This process usually requires changes in the original material.

There were many changes in the process of recontextualising the *dùndún* drumming tradition in Hampshire. The obvious one was its meaning. This is because “music is assumed to be entirely meaningless outside its sociocultural context...audience primarily hears it as music rather than as reflections of social structure” (Nketia, 1981:27). In many African cultures, music forms part of the social structure. It helps define the role of the individual and the group within the community. For example, as a Yorùbá Ọba leads a procession through the town with upright carriage and dignified steps, the type of music is dictated by the nature of his kingly role and the insignia he carries. Every age group and gender has their own distinctive music. The transition from age group to the next may be marked by rites and festivities. In initiation rites for adolescents, a piece of music may stress sexual fertility as well as customary behaviour between sexes.

Amongst the Ga people of Ghana, music is part of the preparation for womanhood during *Otufo* initiation rites for girls. This is similar to *Ọbitun* initiation rites for girls amongst the Ondo people, a Yorùbá sub-group in Nigeria. The young Kaka men of Cameroon perform their *Midimu* music and dance after the circumcision rites as a formal precondition of admission into the society of adults. However, I observed during this investigation that this social aspect of music in African culture was not present in most European cultures. Thus, the

² For example, *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles has been adapted and recontextualised to fit into the Yorùbá theatrical tradition by Ola Rotimi under the new title *The gods are not to blame*

dùndún music was given other meanings during the workshops. These meanings and my experience of recontextualising the *dùndún* in Hampshire will be examined and analysed using the following five concepts which emerged from my reflection.

1.5. The five research concepts

In this investigation, five concepts emerged and the chapters of the thesis are organised around them. In the two case studies, two concepts emerged as significant: ‘representation and presentation of culture and notions of identity’ in the first case study that took place in the church and ‘empowerment’ in the second case study in the prison. The following are the general overview of these five concepts:

1.5.1. Cultural dialogue, understanding and integration

Culture can be termed as a way of life, especially the general customs and belief, of a particular group of people. It is a “way of summarizing the ways in which groups distinguish themselves from other groups” (Wallerstein, 1990: 31-32). Culture can identify an individual within a group, and it can identify a group of people within a community or nation. As a result, a group of people can define their identity based on their shared cultural values.

Dialogue is “a way of exploring the roots of the many crises that face humanity today” (Bohm, Factor and Garrett, 1991:1). This definition is constructed within the global cultural context. Dialogue can enable inquiry into all things that break or interfere with free flow of communication between individual cultures and nations. The word dialogue is derived from two separate Greek words, “dia” which means “through” and “logos” which means “the word. The ability to talk through differences is a prerequisite of any dialogue, though this is not always achieved. For example, the importance of cultural dialogue “as a vehicle for

understanding cultures and subcultures” (Schein, 1993:27) was not part of the colonial project in Africa.

For a cultural dialogue to take place a cultural forum is also necessary. The danger in this approach is that the affairs of the cultural forum may easily fall into the hands of the dominant culture. There may also be a power struggle amongst particular cultures and some powerful people, such as politicians, clerics and intellectuals, who may also turn themselves into guardians of tradition. They may also want to appropriate and define the content of cultures and civilisations for the rest of the society as expressed by Foucault. Thus only through meaningful cultural dialogue can cultural understanding take place.

Cultural integration takes place when two or more cultures come together. Whilst this may be seen by some as a positive step towards cultural understanding, to others, it can be seen as a threat to individual cultural sovereignty and diversity. It can also be seen as cultural assimilation, especially when the cultures do not meet on the basis of equality and independence.

Reflecting on my previous work with ‘Drum4Fun’, I observed that people were able to dialogue and interact with each other during workshops and this often led to cultural understanding. It is upon this paradigm that the *dùndún* drumming project in this investigation will build. Can the *dùndún* create a forum for cultural dialogue? Can it foster cultural understanding amongst the workshop participants? These and many more questions have been examined and analysed in this thesis.

1.5.2. Representation and presentation of culture and notions of identity

“What culture is and what culture does is the subject of conceptual confusion throughout social theory” (Archer, 1985:333). Culture is a broad concept that has generated many debates amongst many scholars (see Cohen, 1993; Featherstone, 1990; Featherstone and Lash, 1999), often resulting in a fundamental confusion in its usage. The reason for this is that “culture embraces a very large range of connotations” (Wallerstein, 1990:31). It can refer to the customs, practices, languages, clothing, values and world views that define individual or social groups.

Identity is defined “as the way(s) in which a person is, or wishes to be, known by certain others”, and culture as identity as the “attempt to represent the person or group in terms of a reified and/or emblemized culture” (Cohen, 1993:195). How an individual defines his identity is a matter of choice; it can be defined individually. Identity can also be defined collectively on the basis of shared cultural values amongst a group of people. However, since every individual is affected by millions of things, people and events throughout their life time, identity can be produced and reproduced. Thus, identity is a “‘production’, which is never complete, [but] always in process” (Hall, 1990:222). It is not fixed; it is fluid.

There are many ways in which people can identify themselves or be identified by others. This includes race by such features as the colour of the skin and/or other physical characteristics such as tribal marks and social status by means of such characteristics as the amount of money they earn or possess, where they live and work, the calibre of people they know and the social clubs to which they belong. Others define ethnicity by their origin and/or ancestry. Race is in part biologically categorised and in part socially constructed. This was my experience in one of the churches that formed part of the case studies in Chapter Four. It

would appear that the members of the community groups in the church were from a single social grouping, which did not include valuing my biological ethnicity. It was made up of middle class white people of the same ideas and values.

Furthermore, environmental factors and the constraints and opportunities that our social system permits help determine our social class. As stated by Foucault, those with big opportunities usually acquire high social status for themselves, which then enable them to have power. This has both the positive and negative side as it contributes to the way some people's cultural and personal identities are defined by a small group of people who hold positions of authority. This was my experience in the two churches in Hampshire where I wanted to play the *dùndún*; my blackness, coupled with the physical appearance of the *dùndún* formed the basis of how my identity was defined by some people. I will discuss this further in Chapter Four.

As a Yorùbá man, I am always conscious of the way in which others define my identity. For example, the statement 'You are black' may not be merely a description; it may have negative or positive values ascribed to it by the person making the statement. Different people have diverse attitudes towards cultural categorisation. Whilst some people value their own culture, some reject their culture for their own reasons and wish to change. The global society has also given us the opportunity to make choices through education, marriage, emigration, immigration, etc. As a result of globalisation, culture or necessity, as in slavery and colonisation, many people have to function or wish to function as members of more than one cultural group, thereby becoming 'bicultural' or even 'multicultural'. This can be viewed as a positive or negative force (as in slavery).

Furthermore, society can force its culture and identity on people. Failure to take up the values of that society by the subjugated group can be misunderstood by the people in power. For example, those immigrants (e.g. people from Moslem countries in the UK) who value their cultural identity and do not want to acculturate or accept the dominant culture may be seen as not culturally tolerant and not fit for society. Those who reject their own culture and wish to change may be seen as traitors to their cultural heritage, family, friends and ancestors. Those who embrace other cultures and are willing to be identified with more than one culture may be misunderstood and mistrusted by both.

Though culture and society are analytically different, they mutually constitute aspects of human organisation (Giddens, 1984). Culture can be transformed through social behaviour within the constraints of particular historical situations. The danger in this according to Floyd (1998) is that there will always be a certain conservatism in the community as the orderliness of the society will often rest in the hands of the elders or people holding power in the society at a given time. These reflections led me to use social constructionism as an important analytical frame.

In the Yorùbá culture, community events and festivals represent some of the shared values. As in many cultures across the globe, music plays a crucial role amongst the Yorùbá as a medium of symbolic transaction and a means of forging and defending the traditional and cultural values of the people in the communities (Chernoff, 1979). Music helps articulate the place of a community or group of people in the global culture. Objects such as drums are part of the manifestation of the component of culture. Hence, music produced by such drums is both a species of culture and a mode of human action in the community.

We cannot underestimate the “iron hold of culture upon the average individual” (Boas, 1932:613). It is a strong bond within the community and it also has certain influence on the people. Nonetheless, it is also clear that human behaviour can never be the mere execution of the model that guides culture (Bourdieu, 1977). This is because every realisation of musical norms in performance carries the potential for unconscious change, and every enactment of tradition opens it to transformation (see, for example, Katz, 1970).

In this investigation, I see culture as the outcome and product of interaction, and people as active in the creation of culture. For example, in the prison, I was flexible in the methods that I used to introduce the *dùndún* so that the prison inhabitants would have the greatest opportunity to adapt the practice I was using to their cultural and personal requirements. Throughout this investigation, culture will be treated in two ways. The first way is as the tool by which we make society meaningful to ourselves. Although cultural objects such as the *dùndún* drums are potent resources in the arenas of identity, flexibility in terms of usage can make the *dùndún* drumming tradition meaningful to other people. The second way is how we construct our own individual meaning in relation to society.

1.5.3. Tradition, authenticity and originality

Tradition and the related concepts of authenticity and originality have been major sources of conflict within discourse of the practice of cultural diversity of music in education. In every society, there are musical traditions as defined by the culture of the people. Therefore, a tradition can last longer in the culture that created it because of the role of the custodians of the tradition in maintaining the values that underpin the tradition, as in the case of the *dùndún* within the Yorùbá culture.

When I, as a *dùndún* practitioner, moved out of my cultural domain, there were two choices open to me; I could choose either to keep rigidly within the tradition or to treat it more flexibly. If I chose to keep rigidly within the tradition, I might have remained, in the new culture, permanently in a position of subjugation (to use a Foucauldian frame). However, if I chose to work more flexibly in relation to the tradition, adapting it to the values of the dominant culture, I stood more chance of acquiring a position of power.

What is authenticity? Who defines authenticity? To what extent can we construe any music as authentic? How can the authenticity of the music played outside its culture be defined, within the paradigm of its tradition? What are the elements that constitute authenticity in the *dùndún* drumming tradition? What constitutes originality?

The notion of authenticity has always been complicated, which is why its role in the field of arts particularly, some music genres such as jazz and blues are not easy to assess:

The fragmentation and subdivision of black music into an ever increasing proliferation of styles and genres which makes a nonsense of this polar opposition between progress and dilution has also contributed to a situation in which authenticity emerges among the music makers as a highly charged and bitterly contested issue (Gilroy, 1993:96).

The *dùndún* drumming tradition is bound up with the notion of authenticity. What this means is that all the elements that authenticate the *dùndún* both as a drum and style of music are infused in the tradition and I have discussed this fully in Chapter Two. These include the

drumming technique, certain features of the *dùndún* and the tradition of carrying the prefix Àyàn as part of the names of the practitioners.

There are many places in which authenticity can be located within a particular musical tradition. It can be located in the score, texts, instrument, performance, style of music, rhythm, sound, harmony, melody, performer, audience, experience, personal conviction, etc. There are a number of value terms that might be associated with authenticity: “‘Authentic’, ‘Real’, ‘Honest’, ‘Truthful’, ‘With integrity’, ‘Actual’, ‘Genuine’, ‘Essential’, ‘Sincere’” (Moore, 2002:209). As we can see the word authentic or authenticity has a number of meanings, which are not necessarily related. In this thesis, authenticity will be defined through the words of the participants in my workshops.

Moore’s notion of authenticity is also based on the realisation of a composer’s score faithfully at a performance. For example, if the music of Béla Bartók is performed by musicians exactly the way it was written, it is then seen as authentic. The meaning of authenticity here is defined around faithfulness to keeping Béla Bartók’s original score. But notions of authenticity can also be constructed around creativity of individual musicians. By this I mean when musicians play the music of Béla Bartók without their own creativity, they limit or ignore their own mood and that of their audience. Thus, authenticity in my version of the oral *dùndún* drumming tradition requires that the practitioners be themselves and are not faithful to the notated score of a distant composer such as Béla Bartók. This was how I define authenticity in the *dùndún* drumming workshops that took place in HMP Portsmouth in Chapter Five.

Originality is defined as “the temporal priority in the statement of an idea” (Stigler, 1955: 293). An idea is not only original at the time of its discovery; when a new idea is developed from the previous one that also becomes original in its own right. If creativity is endless, originality is equally endless, and the further a musical tradition goes, the more the practitioners engage in the process of originality. The continuous creativity and the ability of the practitioners to spontaneously respond to performance contexts are what define originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition.

In the practice of the *dùndún*, tradition, authenticity and originality are closely intertwined. As a result, whatever is played on the drum will be perceived as part of the *dùndún* drumming tradition as it retains an aura of authenticity and originality because of the presence of the drum itself and the continuous creativity of the practitioners. In this way, authenticity is socially constructed by the people involved in music making. I will show how this became apparent through my work in the prison.

1.5.4. Construction of meanings

The question of whether music has meaning and how meanings are constructed can be problematic. I recall my first encounter with Hungarian folksongs in Budapest; I had arrived in the country barely two months in 1996 and I left home with enthusiasm to watch the performance, knowing that there were many great Hungarian composers like Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály, amongst others, and that Hungarian folk music has also been widely researched (Sarosi, 1986; Vargyas, 2005).

The atmosphere at the venue of the performance was like a carnival. The band consisted of chordophone instruments, mainly the violin. Judging from the responses of the people, I

would say the performance was a huge success. The Hungarian who invited me asked whether I enjoyed the performance, and I responded positively in the sense that music is art. Through acculturation, I had learnt to appreciate the concept of art music within European culture. The cultural surrounds of art music in the European tradition are different from the social contexts in which Yorùbá music is performed in Nigeria. I found it difficult initially to grasp the social contexts that characterise European art music as they are very different from those that I had experience in Yorùbá culture. How do we construct meanings to music that is traceable to a distinct culture, and on which parameters do we construct music meanings?

Since the aim of this section of this chapter is not to engage in the systematic review of the literature on music and meaning as developed by ethnomusicologists, philosophers of music and musicologists, I will therefore limit myself to the area of debate that is relevant to my investigation and reflect on relevant literature. However, perhaps there is a need to first understand and clarify the meaning of ‘meaning’ itself.

There are many definitions of meaning and “if meaning has multiple meanings, when we speak about music and meaning, we either have to be careful to specify the sense in which we are using the term or abandon its use altogether” (Rice, 2001:22). This is because there is no agreement within academic discourse on the parameters in which musical meaning should be based and defined.

Whilst some suggest that musical meaning should be based on linguistic or semiological frameworks, others think musical structure and compositions are more important. Furthermore, a number of theories hold that musical meaning comes from specific parts of

the musical form. Alperson (1987) uses the term *formal meaning* and Budd (1995) defines the term *intramusical meaning* as:

The core of musical understanding – of hearing music with understanding – is the experience of what I shall call *intramusical* meaning of a musical work, that is, the work's audible musical structure, the musically significant relations (melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and so on) that obtain amongst the sounds and silences that compose the work (Budd, 1995:127).

Budd's theory and idea is formed around an academic understanding of European classical tradition in which musical meaning is constructed around the form and structure of the music. Budd's core of musical understanding is all about hearing, but misses out on the other vital understanding such as the embodiment of the music itself in forms such as dance.

Davies' (1994) *formal significance* places musical meaning or understanding on the coherence of the work; to understand a piece of music it is necessary to understand how it is put together. Both Budd's notion of *intramusical meaning* and Davies' *formal significance* do not talk about the musical meaning in a broader perspective. However, a new position turns to the significance music has in human life: "*meaning-for-the-subject...the meaning music has for all human beings, rather than solely for individuals...music-for-us*" (Koopman and Davies, 2001:261). Musical meaning is built on music's significance, importance and value in relation to the people who make, listen and relate to it.

In the Yorùbá view, music is meaningless without a grasp of its underlying significance in relation to society and human behaviour. Music is life; “it is not a thing at all but an [interactive] activity” (Small, 1998:2) between the musicians and the audience as they both contribute to the meaning of music. No audience, no performance. Therefore, to construct the meaning of music, it is important to consider the audience’s experience even if the initial impetus may have come from the musician. This idea locates musical meaning in the relationship between the ‘producer and consumer’, in which one cannot function effectively without the other. This leads to the theory advanced by some ethnomusicologists (Sugarman, 1997 and Waterman, 1990), which suggests that music is social behaviour, and because music is made and understood by people in society, every performance of music is also a performance of social structure or social relations.

In her contribution to this debate, Boyce-Tillman (2007) creates a model and suggests that it is the relationship between the four domains – construction, materials, values and expression – in the musical experience that enables meaning to be made. For her, spirituality is at the heart of the experience and meaning of music and her definition of spirituality as “the ability to transport the audience to... ‘another world’” (Boyce-Tillman, 2007:209) catches my attention. As a Yorùbá man, I have re/defined ‘another world’ within the aesthetic of Yorùbá culture and belief to suggest my own contribution to the debate. It is for this reason that I interpret another world as a ‘space’, which becomes another domain in the model below.

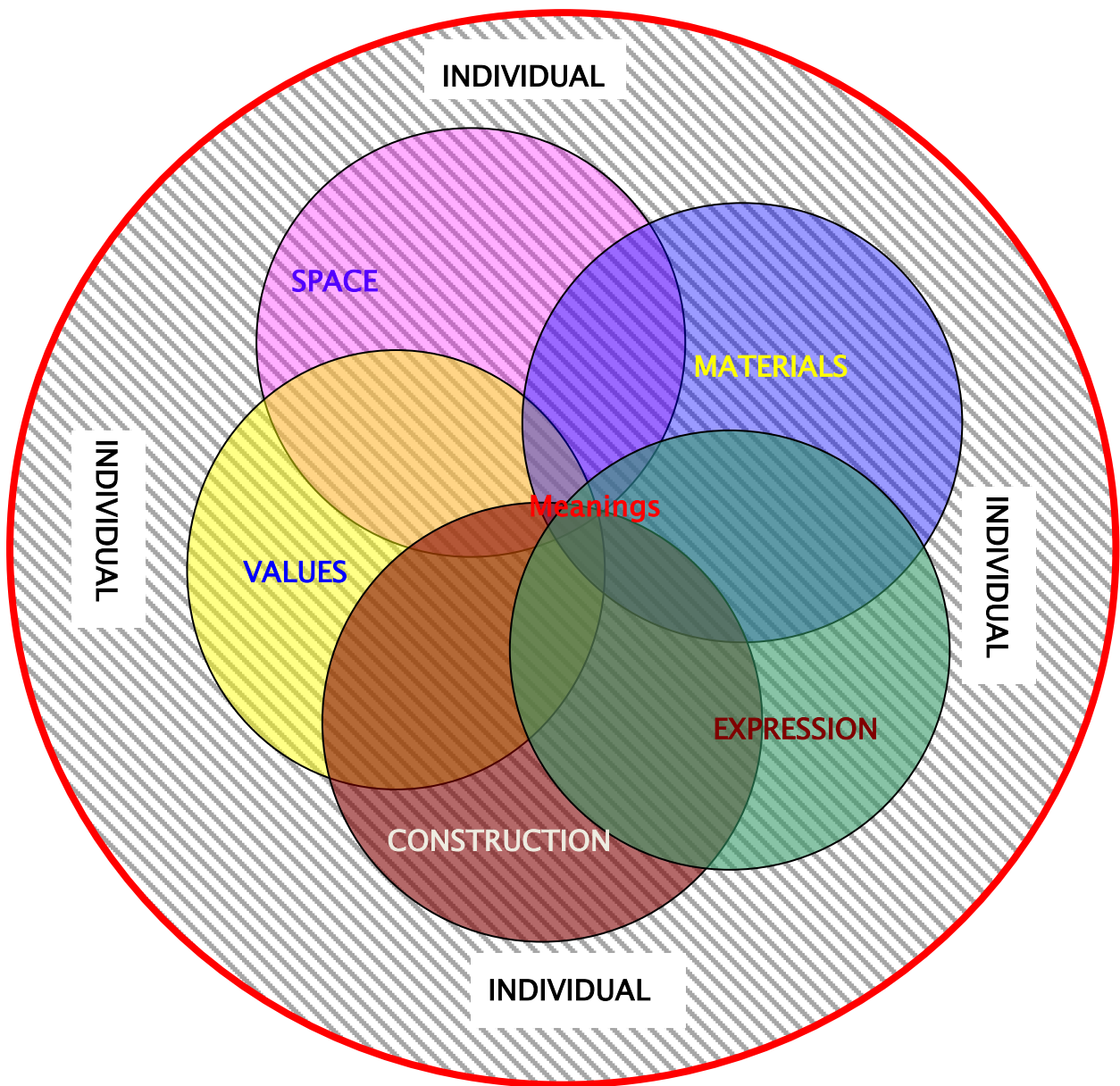


Fig. 1. Model on construction of meanings

In this model, we can place the main meanings of music in any of the five domains, because all elements that contribute to a piece of music have their own symbolic meaning for the performer and listener. These elements are texts in their own right and together are capable of transporting people into another world. In terms of 'space', this can be physical or metaphysical, e.g. concert hall, church, market, street, theatre, shrines, imagined or liminal

space, etc. For example, a priest who goes into a trance during a ceremony travels to another world through a liminal 'space'.

Some musical instruments such as the Yorùbá ritual drums are made from special 'materials'. These are ultimately bound up with the ritual 'values' placed on the drums and the 'expression' of the drummers and dancers. The significance of the values cannot be ignored when interpreting the music played on these drums. The mode of 'construction' is also important when finding meaning to a piece of music. Pieces of music have sections that are repeated, or varied or contrasted as we shall see in Chapter Two when we examine how *dùndún* music uses certain rhythmic and melodic fragments. Therefore, in its wholeness, I will suggest that each domain in the model contributes to the meaning people make from the musical experience.

The other theory is the one which sees music as emotional expression. Through music, people can express their emotion. "There is no expression without something being expressed" (Supicic, 1971:193). Music can bring back the memory of the past, and the significance that surrounds that can easily be emotionally expressed and bring the behaviour into the domain of discourse.

It may be said that a piece of traditional music possesses extra musical meaning or ability to signify something, but this is not always the case. Whilst some music compositions do not go beyond themselves or represent anything, some may also signify something. However, what is probably true of music is its expressive power; yet expressiveness may be absent from music of great value. This is explained within human behaviour:

“music has proven itself to be a basic human behaviour that is useful to mankind in a broad variety of ways. With it we can aesthetize, anesthetize, empathize, energize, exercise, commercialize, manipulate, meditate, medicate, heal, relax and recreate with it; we can modify our environments with it and even earn a living with it (Haack, 1983:14).

Drumming can serve as a vehicle of expression and meaning. I would like to locate musical meaning in the people who make it and consider how and whether my subjects (workshop participants) can employ the musical and cultural values of the *dùndún*, its nature and significance strategically to their benefit. Therefore, an effort will be made to find what is expressed and use these appropriately in the construction of meaning during this investigation.

1.5.5. Empowerment

In life, there are many reasons why people lose their confidence. This may include social discrimination and/or lack of love. As a result of the social practice and value system, some people also experience deprivation within society (like the people in prison) leading to loss of personal identity and power. Hence, the theory of empowerment has also been used by many scholars to deal with the issues of the powerlessness of ethnic minority groups who experience denigration (Collins, 1990).

In the health sector, empowerment has been identified as implicit within western music therapy theory and practice (Daveson, 2001a and Procter, 2001). It has been described as an essential part of the therapeutic process, both as a pathway to control through patient's

choice, and as a process of self-authentication (Daveson, 2001a). The emphasis here is on the patient being able to regain him/herself. The concept of empowerment in the prison emphasises the importance of the inhabitants regaining their psychological power within the prison system.

The concept of empowerment here “entails the restoration of power and choice so that people may act, or cognitively and emotionally respond, in ways that are authentic or true to themselves” (Daveson, 2001a: 29). When empowerment takes place in a genuine way, it can result in a change in our self-perception. In the prison, the drumming workshop was conceptualised as a mechanism for this change with the aim of nurturing the development of identity and self confidence, fostering a positive and realistic image of self and creating independence of thought and action amongst the inhabitants.

It is within the paradigm of powerlessness that the concept of empowerment in this investigation will be situated using Foucault’s theory of social constructionism. This will be used specifically in the analysis of the *dùndún* in the prison context, where power has been removed from the prison inhabitants. Within this theory, which I have discussed fully in Chapter Five, Foucault says that the people in power construct certain ideology for society based on their own values. They define the content of cultures and civilisations and how people should behave. As a result, people who fail to uphold these values not only lose their basic freedom and power in society, they are also sometimes locked up.

The concept of empowerment will focus on the prison inhabitants who have been disempowered by the dominant culture because they have failed to observe things that society has set down as a legal framework. It takes into account the effect of powerlessness in their

lives and then takes a holistic approach in helping them to restore their power psychologically.

In the Yorùbá culture, the *dùndún* is very powerful and it also often empowers the practitioners and gives them a voice within the society and culture. This thesis will explore this mechanism to empower those who are in the state of any depression or feeling less valued. Prison is a place where this premise can be tested, so that its inhabitants can move away from humiliation and self-condemnation to empowerment. This is not a theory of rebellion against the prison authority, but rather the rediscovery of ‘self’ within that system.

1.6. Conclusion

This thesis is about my practice as a *dùndún* practitioner in two distinct places in Hampshire. At the workshops, the *dùndún* and I will represent my culture and I will also present the *dùndún* drumming tradition to the participants with the hope of fostering cultural understanding. The concepts of ‘tradition, authenticity and originality’ will be defined through my own experience and that of the participants. The *dùndún* and its associated values and I will go through the process of recontextualisation and all the issues raised in that process will be analysed using the five concepts earlier discussed. Questions about objectivity and subjectivity will arise in my use of my own standpoint as an important part of this thesis. I will explore this in more detail and critically evaluate my own standpoint.

The next chapter is the literature review about the *dùndún*. It discusses the ethnographic and historical origin of the *dùndún* both in oral and literary traditions. It also interrogates the *dùndún* both as an instrument and a style and also the relationship between the *dùndún* and the other traditional drums of the Yorùbá and the position of the *dùndún* amongst the

practitioners. The chapter provides an opportunity for thorough description of the *dùndún* drumming tradition. This will be written from the point of view of a Yorùbá man and a *dùndún* practitioner.



Fig. 2. The author playing a *dùndún* drum



Fig. 3. The author playing a *djembe* drum

Chapter Two

The *Dùndún* in the Traditional Context

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will examine the *dùndún* in its original context in Nigeria. Thus, it will concentrate mainly on the third concept mentioned in Chapter One – ‘Tradition, authenticity and originality’. The other concepts will be dealt with briefly at the beginning and also run through the chapter. This chapter will analyse various traditions associated with the *dùndún* drumming. It will analyse and examine strands of authenticity both in the *dùndún* drum and its musical traditions. Furthermore, it will examine how originality can be defined in the paradigm of an existing tradition. Lastly, it will analyse how a tradition in a particular culture can become an element of originality in another.

2.1.1. Tradition, authenticity and originality

This concept is concerned with the long-standing tradition of the *dùndún* in the Yorùbá context in Nigeria. This chapter will examine the historical origin of the *dùndún* and its place within the musical culture of the Yorùbá, drawing on both oral and literary traditions. It will examine the relationship between tradition and originality in the drumming skills of the practitioners and the materials of the drums, the construction of the music within the tradition and the core values embedded in it.

In the Yorùbá context, it is the tradition itself that authenticates the *dùndún*. Many strands can be identified with this process of authentication. What are these strands and how can we define originality within the paradigm of the *dùndún* drumming tradition? What role does the tradition play in the construction of my identity as a practitioner? These questions form the basis of the analysis in this chapter.

2.1.2. The other concepts

In terms of ‘cultural dialogue, understanding and integration’, it is important to understand the Yorùbá world view and beliefs. The Yorùbá believe that a drum carver must enter into a dialogue with the spirits that inhabit a particular tree before felling it to carve a drum. This chapter sets out the bases of the Yorùbá musical culture in general and that of the *dùndún* drumming tradition in particular and how the Yorùbá integrate their belief into this tradition. Lastly, it examines the forum for dialogue between the drum carver and the spirit world in the process of constructing the *dùndún* drums.

In terms of ‘representation and presentation of culture and notions of identity’, the Yorùbá culture contains a concept that an object such as a drum can form part of one’s identity. The *dùndún* plays a vital role in the identity of the practitioners. It also represents an important part of the Yorùbá musical culture and forms part of their identity. Therefore, identity can be constructed around the *dùndún* individually and collectively, though, through received wisdom, the *dùndún* is said to have travelled to Yorùbáland from another culture. How did the *dùndún* become a Yorùbá musical instrument? Why did it become the main musical identity of the Yorùbá? What is the significance of creating an identity around the *dùndún*? Why and how did the *dùndún* become part of my identity? These are some of the questions that will be examined in this chapter.

One of the things that the *dùndún* connotes in the Yorùbá musical culture is power. The underpinning factor behind the power of the *dùndún* within the Yorùbá musical culture is the myths surrounding the *dùndún* as well as the belief of the Yorùbá in these myths:

A myth is a narrative, a foundational symbolic story or set

of stories through which a nation or cultural group within it understands and remembers its origins and envisions its “end times” in order to live life meaningfully in the present (Grey, 1996:242).

Every society has its own social myths and they have social functions. A myth can help keep the deeds of the great heroes in the memories of the people. It can also help in the continuity of certain traditions within a society. Furthermore, because everyone, or almost everyone, believes in these myths, they act as a cohesive force within a society. They can be described as social glue that holds societies together.

On the other hand, “myths or beliefs may also serve to obstruct both thought and action by encouraging people to accept as fact that which may really be fiction” (Shanas, 1979:3). Myths are sometimes created in order to establish certain behaviour within the society and also to uphold social structures, which makes myths parts of social construction. Foucault (1972) observes that when a discourse is represented in a particular way by the people in authority, the knowledge the discourse produces receives a stamp of truth and becomes empowered. This then forms part of the social structure in the society. The discourses about the *dùndún* are represented through the myths constructed by the practitioners who are dominant within the Yorùbá musical culture. In Foucauldian terms, it shows how myth and story can cement the position of tradition in its dominant culture.

These myths and stories established what was ‘true’ and hence authentic within the tradition and helped to reinforce the power of the practitioners. Thus, as Foucault says every myth is a way of claiming and retaining power. This chapter will examine how the rigidity of the

tradition constructed around the Yorùbá ritual drums becomes a source of empowerment for the *dùndún* and its practitioners. Lastly, it will examine various strands that make up empowerment within the *dùndún* drumming tradition.

2.2. General overview of the Yorùbá musical culture

“The drum is the foundation of Yorùbá instrumental music” (Adegbite, 1988:15) and the drums can be grouped into two categories. The first group is unimembranophonic, a group of single headed drums with a fixed membrane head on one end of the carved wood with the other end either opened or not. The skin of the drums is usually held tightly to a single permanent tension with pegs just below the edge of the drum.

The Yorùbá ritual drums such as *Àgbá*, *Ìgbìn*, *Òshùgbó*, *Ìpèsè*, *Gbèdu*, *Àgbá-Ọbalùfòn* and *Ejùgbònà*, which King (1961) refers to as “sacred” belong to this group. They are sources of empowerment for both the *Òrìsà* and their devotees. They “stimulate the devotees into action – singing, dancing till some find themselves in a state of trance” (Ajayi, 1988:39). They provide the medium through which the gap between the world of the ancestors and world of the living are bridged. These drums function exclusively in the religious context and they are restricted to the shrines of the *Òrìsà*. The rigidity placed on them becomes a source of empowerment for the *dùndún* as a social drum.

According to oral history and the belief of many Yorùbá people, the *Òrìsà* created these drums, the style of the music and the ritual dances associated with them for their enjoyment. We can rightly suggest that all the Yorùbá gods and goddesses are creative/performing artists. “This drum group is said to be the group [a] particular deity enjoyed, danced, or listened to during his earthly life” (Adegbite, 1988:15). The drums form part of the identity of the *Òrìsà*

and only the drum created by a particular *Òrìsà* can be played in its shrine. As the discourses about these drums were represented and constructed around the *Òrìsà*, these put the drummers in the dominant position within the Yorùbá culture because of the place of the *Òrìsà* within their belief system.

We can see that constructing an identity around objects is a long tradition in the Yorùbá culture and the issue of identity is taken seriously. My process of constructing my identity around the *dùndún* as set out in Chapter One is thus not an unusual practice in the Yorùbá context. However, this tradition met with strong resistance during the colonial time in Nigeria when the practitioners attempted to establish the *dùndún* as an important part of their tradition in missionary churches. This was probably done in an attempt to change the dominant status of the practitioners within the culture. I also found myself in the same situation; I was not allowed to play the *dùndún* in two churches where I attempted it in Hampshire. As a practitioner who belongs to a dominant group in the Yorùbá culture, I was marginalised and I had to operate at a subjugated level. This will be examined and interrogated in Chapter Four.

The second group of drums are bi-membranophonic, bi-percussive or ambipercussive drums with a wooden body of hourglass or cylindrical shape, i.e. *bàtá* and *dùndún*. The *bàtá* is a bi-membranophonic and ambipercussive instrument that is hit on both membranes with a combination of a hand and a leather strap called *bílálà*. The drum has permanent tension in that the skin is held by strips (both made from deer or antelope skins). This is fastened and pulled tightly across the body of the drum so that the drums are obliged to adhere to the body and therefore increase their bi-tension.

According to received wisdom, the *bàtá* is believed to be the sacred drum of Aláàfin³ Sango, who later became the Yorùbá god of thunder and lightning. Hence, both the *bàtá* music and dance form part of Sango's identity until the entertainment masquerades of Òyó adopted the *bàtá* as their ensemble drum and music. Henceforth, the rigidity placed on the *bàtá* as a sacred drum of Aláàfin Sango ceased as it became accessible to everyone. It has been integrated into many musical genres across Yorùbáland and some members of the *bàtá* ensemble drums are now being used in some churches. Nonetheless, its popularity still trails behind that of the *dùndún*.

The most popular musical instrument in this group is the *dùndún* set of drums commonly called the 'talking drum'. It is a set of a double-headed hourglass drums and its family consists of *ìyáàlù*⁴ (mother of the drum) *kẹríkẹrí*⁵, *ìsáájú*, *ìkehìn*, *kànnàngó*, *gáangan*, *àdàmò*, and *gúdúgúdú*, the only single-headed with a kettle drum shape in the ensemble⁶. Some people also believe that *koso* is a member of the *dùndún* family.

There are two main sub-families of the *dùndún* drums. The *ìyáàlù* sub-family consists of *ìyáàlù dùndún*, *ìsáájú*, *ìkehìn* and *kẹríkẹrí*. The *gáangan* sub-family consists of *gáangan*, *kànnàngó*, and *àdàmò*; the *gúdúgúdú* can be played in both sub-families. However, there is no restriction in the formation of the ensemble. In some cases, members of one group can be used as substitutes or parts of another group. In both sub-families, only *gáangan* and *ìyáàlù dùndún* can function as talking drums. The following paragraphs discuss the origin of this unique musical instrument.

³ This is the traditional title of the king of Òyó.

⁴ This is often called the *dùndún* drum because of its significant role as the leading drum.

⁵ This can be termed as the father drum because of its size; it is bigger than the *ìyáàlù dùndún*.

⁶ All the pictures of the drums are at the back of this chapter.

2.3. The historical origin of the *dùndún*

The historical origin of the *dùndún* can be divided into two parts – oral and literary. There are many versions to the origin of this drum in both traditions. In the oral tradition, I will reflect on the origin of the *dùndún* that was passed on to me. I will also do a review of the literature.

2.3.1. The historical origin of the *dùndún* – the oral tradition

This contains numerous myths about the origin of the *dùndún*. I learnt through oral tradition that “Àyàn taught some Yorùbá people the art of drumming and he was so loved that they deified him after his death” (Laoye 1, 1959:10). This belief is grounded in a myth that Àyàn Àganlú was the first person to play the *dùndún* drum in *Saworo*, a small village (or town) in Ìbàràbáland (also known as Nupeland). Hence, “Àyàn is believed by all Yorùbá to be the father of the art of drumming” (Olaniyan, 1993:54).

However, Euba (1990) cites some practitioners as saying that the *gúdúgúdú* and *ìyáàlù* came to Ilé-Ifè (also known as Ifè) from Mecca. The first reference to Mecca is contained in Johnson’s book: *The history of the Yorùbás: from the earliest times to the beginning of the British Protectorate* (1921). He was a British missionary and priest in Òyó in the nineteenth century. Johnson claims that Odùduwà, the son of King Lámurúdu of Mecca, was expelled by the faithful Moslems because he reverted to idolatry. Therefore, whilst wandering eastwards from Mecca for ninety days, Odùduwà settled at Ilé-Ifè.

This story did not exist in the Yorùbá oral tradition that I grew up with. As the first written document, this book was the first reference for anyone learning about the history of the Yorùbá in schools. In my own opinion, it was through this that Mecca slipped into Yorùbá oral history and influenced it. However, evidence of further research has discredited this as an

unfounded claim because “Ifè is west of Mecca” (Bascom, 1969: 9) and not east as Johnson suggested.

Another myth suggests that Ọbàtálá and Odùduwà brought the *dùndún* from heaven to found Ilé-Ifè. Thieme also mentions Ilé-Ifè in his account, which he obtains from Ọba Adetoyese Laoye 1, (Tìmi of Èdẹ):

The introduction of *dùndún* dates from the time of
the Yorùbá migration into their present homeland,
prior to the founding of Ifè, their migratory route
having crossed the territory inhabited by the Ìbàrìbá
(Thieme, 1970:15)

In this account, Thieme does not tell us the point of departure of the Yorùbá, but rather gives the route of their journey. Furthermore, ‘their present homeland’ in Thieme’s account needs more scrutiny. This suggests to me that the *dùndún* existed first in one place and then travelled to another place known then as the Yorùbá homeland and it was after this that Ifè was founded.

In his contribution to this debate, King (1961) suggests that “*bàtá* were probably developed from *koso*” and “*koso* were introduced into Yorùbá music at the time of the founding of Ifè, having been imported from the North” (King, 1961:4). My question is why was *koso* taken to Ifè when Ọyọ is closer to the north? Furthermore, the claim that the *bàtá* developed from *koso* contradicts the received wisdom that Aláàfin Sango brought the *bàtá* with him to Old

Ọyó from Ìbàràbáland. If *koso* was taken to Ifè and the *bàtá* developed from it, does it mean this development took place in Ifè? King further says that:

The Aláàfin Ajiboyede is credited with their introduction. Requiring a new drum to raise his prestige and to mark the year of the jubilee of his reign (*bebe*), he had the *dùndún* family evolved from the *bàtá* group by loosening the binding on the “tensioning thongs” on the latter group of instruments, by altering the shape of the drum body to make both membranes of the same size (King, 1961:4)

Chronologically, *koso* was the first drum, *bàtá* then developed from *koso* and the *dùndún* evolved from *bàtá* and Aláàfin Ajiboye was the brain behind this innovation. Since Aláàfin Ajiboye did not reign in Ifè as a king, this innovation would not have taken place in Ifè.

However, looking at the Thieme and King accounts, there seems to be an agreement that a drum indeed travelled to Ifè; but whilst Thieme believes this to be the *dùndún*, King suggests it was the *koso*. Furthermore, if it is true that *bàtá* developed from *koso* and *koso* travelled to Ilé-Ifè, and *koso* is a member of the *dùndún* ensemble, we can as well agree with Thieme’s version of the story that the *dùndún* travelled to Ilé-Ifè. King’s (1961) suggestion that the *dùndún* is created from the *bàtá* drum is a new story to me since the *bàtá* and the *dùndún* are completely different in their structures. King also affirms this; “for almost in all other respects (e.g. shape, technique of playing, timbre) they are completely different” (King, 1961:2).

In Olaniyan's (1993) version, he cites Sàlawù Àyánkúnle, a native of Òyó, as saying that Òyó is the original home of the *dùndún* and that the *dùndún* was developed in Òyó during the reign of Aláàfin Ajiboyede⁷. As this claim does not have a direct reference to Saworo, Ìbàrìbáland or Àyàn Àganlú, it is clear to me that Salawu Àyànkunle does not know why his name has the prefix 'Àyàn'.

However, we cannot completely rule out this claim because "among the Yorùbá, talking with musical instruments is probably more extensive in Òyó Yorùbá areas than it is in Eastern and Southern Yorùbá" (Euba, 1977:11). Furthermore, since Old Òyó used to border Ìbàrìbáland and Àyàn Àganlú was an Ìbàrìbá man, it is possible that those he taught the art of drumming brought the *dùndún* with them to Old Òyó and subsequently to the present Òyó. Furthermore, when we remember that the *bàtá* also came to Old Òyó from Ìbàrìbáland with Aláàfin Sango, whose mother was also an Ìbàrìbá woman, we can rightly say that the *dùndún* has a direct link with Òyó. All the gaps about the origin of the *dùndún* as contained in the oral tradition will need to be accounted for before any credibility can be placed on any assumption. The origin of the *dùndún* in the literary tradition is also not conclusive.

2.3.2. The historical origin of the *dùndún* – the literary tradition

The literary account about the origin of the *dùndún* which has become the main source of reference for many scholars is contained in Hause's (1948) lexicographical work on the names of musical instruments in Africa. She suggests that the *dùndún* probably originated from northern Nigeria amongst the Hausa people. She traces the etymology of the names of drums in other parts of West Africa.

⁷ It must be said that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Òyó was the political headquarters of the Yorùbá. Hence, the influence of Òyó on the history of the Yorùbá in general is huge.

She believes that the ultimate origin of the hourglass drum seems most likely to be in Asia and it was introduced to Africa by the Arabs. The Hausa from northern Nigeria then introduced the *dùndún* and two terminologies to the Yorùbá in the south. The terminologies referred to here are the *kalangu* and the *ganga* which according to Hause (1948) become the *kànnàngó* and the *gángan* respectively in Yorùbá language.

The fact that the term for a drum came from one source (that is if we agree) or is used amongst the Hausa people does not necessarily mean that the drum actually came from the Arabs. When we realise the level of expertise and the frequency of the *dùndún* usage amongst the Yorùbá people, there can be no doubt that both the *gángan* and the *dùndún* are Yorùbá musical instruments.

Nonetheless, when we realise that Islamic religion came to the Yorùbáland through the north and the *kalangu* and *ganga* are used as part of Islamic religious observances amongst the Hausa this will raise a little doubt about the origin of the *gángan*. However, in Arabia where Islamic religion came from: “there has been a controversy over the use of music in worship” (Anderson, 1971:146). This suggests that the *gángan* and *kànnàngó* could not have come from Arabia.

Adegbite (1988) affirms this when he notes: “although this drum is usually associated with the Islam [among the Hausa people in Nigeria], there seems to be no available evidence to support its existence in Arabia” (Adegbite, 1988:17). This discredits Hause’s (1948) claim that the *dùndún* came from Arabia.

Although the Hausa *ganga* and the Yorùbá *gangan* are both double-headed drums, they refer to different kinds of drums. The Hausa *ganga* which I have seen many times is a cylindrical and fixed pitch drum while Yorùbá *gangan* is an hourglass tension drum. Hause also confirms this:

It must be noted that throughout the African area,
with the exception of the Yorùbá, this term was
applied to the cylindrical drum while in Morocco
it refers to a type of kettle drum. On the other hand,
in Tunis, where Hausa influence is especially strong,
it refers also to the cylindrical type of drum.
(Hause, 1948:26).

This means the Yorùbá *gangan* might not have come from the Hausa. More importantly, there is no evidence to suggest that the *ìyáàlù dùndún* originated from the Hausa people. There are certain strands that characterise the *ìyáàlù dùndún* as an authentic Yorùbá drum. These will be interrogated using some of the concepts of this research.

2.4. Strands of authenticity in the *dùndún* drumming tradition

There are a number of strands of authenticity in the *dùndún* drumming, all of which are part or embedded in the tradition itself. In essence, what defines the nature of the *dùndún* drumming tradition is notions of authenticity. The constitution of authenticity in the *dùndún* tradition in Nigeria will be discussed below.

2.4.1. Authenticity in the context of name and identity

The first one lies in the construction of name and identity of the practitioners. We will remember that Àyàn Àganlú was the one credited with the creation of the *dùndún* in Saworo, Ìbàràbáland. As part of the tradition, the practitioners form part of their identity around Àyàn Àganlú by carrying the prefix 'Àyàn' in their names to denote their profession, thus Àyàntoye, Àyànkunle, Àyànyemi, Àyànbunmi, etc. This prefix has become an important element of authenticity in the *dùndún* drumming tradition. It authenticates the profession as well as the drumming families. It further confirms the practice of creating identity around objects in the Yorùbá culture. This tradition does not only immortalise Àyàn Àganlú, it also naturalises him as a Yorùbá man. It also gives power to the practitioners as their identity is constructed around the god of drumming, Àyàn Àganlú. Furthermore, since the drums are virtually everywhere, the Yorùbá have come to believe that all traditional and professional drummers must be Àyàn, irrespective of the drum they play and whether they come from the drumming families or not. The significance of the title is also placed on the art of drumming. Àyàn is a name as well as a title.

This tradition also added to my identity as people often called me Àyàn whenever I played the *gangan* in Nigeria without bothering to know my real name and whether I was from a *dùndún* drumming family or not. My mother once told me that when I was a baby I used to beat her back rhythmically whenever she carried me on her back. This is an inherited trait in the Yorùbá world view and I grew up to confirm it. I did not choose Àyàn Àganlú, but he chose me and empowered me as a drummer. My identity was based on a vocation. This was the insignia that people saw in me; hence they constructed the meaning of my identity around it. Moreover, there is a common belief about drum progenies that a person could be born a

drummer without necessarily being a descendant of Àyàn. As a professional talking drummer, I have taken the drum as an important part of my identity.

2.4.2. Authenticity in the context of the *dùndún* structure

Another element of authenticity lies in the hierarchical structure of the *ìyáàlù dùndún* sub-family ensemble. The Yorùbá is a patriarchal society. However, the *ìyáàlù dùndún* (mother of the *dùndún* or drum) is the leading drum in the ensemble. It would appear that the patriarchal structure of the Yorùbá family is not extended to the structure of the musical instruments. The leading role within the ensemble is vested in *ìyáàlù dùndún*, but despite this, women are forbidden to play the drum. Interestingly, none of the practitioners that I interviewed in Nigeria was able to give me a concrete reason for making the mother of the drum a leader in an ensemble where the father of the drum, *kèríkerì* is present. This structure empowers the *ìyáàlù dùndún* and also gives her the power to speak within the ensemble.

Olaniyan identifies certain characteristic features of the *ìyáàlù dùndún* as strands of authenticity in the *ìyáàlù dùndún*:

It is true that talking drums are found in most parts of West Africa, certain important characteristic features make the *ìyáàlù-dùndún* (*dùndún* mother drum) a unique Yorùbá invention. Investigation has shown that the *ìyáàlù-dùndún* is big in size with bells sewn at each end of it, whereas most other talking drums in West Africa, including those found in northern Nigeria, are without bell rattles and are smaller in sizes than *ìyáàlù-*

dùndún (Olaniyan, 1993:54).

There are talking drums, as well as a number of drums that function as talking instruments, in West Africa. However, there are important characteristics which distinguish the *ìyáàlù dùndún* from other talking drums. The bell rattles, which Olaniyan mentioned above are one of these. They are called *saworo* in Yorùbá language. This to me is a means to represent Saworo in Ìbàràbáland, the birth place of Àyàn Àganlú, the one credited for the creation of the drum. It takes the drum back to its root. Despite that, there are talking drums in other parts of West Africa; these characteristic features of the *ìyáàlù dùndún* make it a unique instrument for the Yorùbá people. The significance of *saworo* as an element of authenticity is encapsulated in a common phrase of the *ìyáàlù dùndún* itself: *saworo nilù ilù tí kòní saworo kì í sè lù gidi, saworo nilù* (*saworo* is significant, an *ìyáàlù dùndún* without *saworo* is not authentic, *saworo* is significant).

2.4.3. Authenticity in the context of the drumming techniques

The drumming techniques are another strand of authenticity that helps differentiate the *dùndún* tradition from other talking drum traditions commonly found across West Africa. The two talking drums within the *dùndún* drumming traditions are the *ìyáàlù dùndún* and *gáangan*. The *ìyáàlù dùndún* is played by “hand pressure techniques” and the *gáangan* is played by “armpit shoulder techniques” (Olaniyan, 1993:54). The hand pressure technique is necessary for the *ìyáàlù dùndún*, as it is a big drum and cannot be held comfortably under the armpit. The drummer uses a long *apá* (a strap) to hang it on his shoulder and the body of the drum rests on his hip.

However, “most master drums in other West African communities are played by armpit-shoulder pressure techniques” (Olaniyan, 1993:54). The master drums are the drums that function as talking drums in the ensemble. Those that Olaniyan refers to here are the *gangan* drums; they are the only talking drums that are played by the armpit-shoulder pressure technique. This suggests to me that the *gangan* drums are the only available talking drums in other parts of West Africa. The Yorùbá people have authority over the *ìyáàlù dùndún* and its usage because they were trained by Àyàn Àganlú. Thus, the “*dùndún* music is indigenous Yorùbá music” (Euba, 1990:452) and it constructs their musical-cultural identity. The ‘hand pressure technique’ is unique as it authenticates the *ìyáàlù dùndún* as a Yorùbá drum.

To play the *ìyáàlù dùndún* during a performance, the drummer gets hold of the appropriate number of strings with one of his hands, pulls them downward and simultaneously presses the remaining strings against his hip with his lower arm and then strikes the drum with a drumming stick. The numbers of the strings to pull will depend on the size of the drum and hand of the drummer; ideally, it should not be too many. The tension strings of the *ìyáàlù dùndún* are, therefore, manipulated with a combination of hand, fingers, the wrist, the lower arm, and the hip bone. The highest pitch on the *ìyáàlù dùndún* can be achieved by pulling and pressing the strings so that they almost touch the drum shell. The *ìyáàlù dùndún* is able to make use of all the pitches which its tensioning strings can produce while other secondary instruments usually have their tensioning strings tied in the middle to produce a fixed pitch.

The *gangan* is the first choice for anyone training on a talking drum. It is easily manipulated and it requires lesser strength. It is small in size, which is why it is played by armpit-shoulder techniques. Its strap is hung on the shoulder of the drummer and held tightly under his armpit. The strap is usually adjustable; the shorter the strap, the tighter it can fit under the armpit.

The drummer presses and releases the tensioning strings of the drum under his armpit with his upper arm and strikes its skin accordingly. In the performance context, the hand keeping the drum in the armpit always has the shape of the letter ‘V’ (see fig. 8). This is considered the correct authentic way of holding the drum.

Both the *gáangan* and *ìyáàlù dùndún* and other tensioning drums in the ensemble are played by striking one of the two sides covered with *awọ* (skin) at a time with a drum stick commonly called *òpá*. The drum stick which is always in the shape of the number ‘seven’ is usually thick in the bottom and gradually narrower towards the top. At the top it is given a flared round head and covered with a piece of skin, which prevents the stick from splitting and the drum from damaging. A piece of cloth is also used to cover the handle of the stick to prevent the drummer from hurting himself and also to give him a better grip.

Generally, the *dùndún* is characterised as a ‘mobile’ drum. The *dùndún* drummers usually move around, either in order to visit different guests at an assembly or simply to respond to the choreography of the dancers. However, whilst he is away, he is not disengaged from the whole ensemble. He uses his drum to call anyone who misses his rhythm. Invariably, he knows what others are playing as he creates the rhythm, the style of music and the melody. The role of the *ìyáàlù dùndún* drummers is a multi-faceted one; they are composer, arranger, and performer. The *gáangan* sub-family ensemble usually stays together as the *gáangan* is not as loud as the *ìyáàlù dùndún*.

The posture or the standing position of the *ìyáàlù dùndún* practitioners in the performance context is another important strand. An *ìyáàlù* drummer never stands upright in the

performance context. He always tilts towards the side in which he is holding a stick⁸. This reflects in a Yorùbá proverb; *ẹ̀sẹ̀ onílù kan kì í tólẹ̀* (one leg of a drummer never reaches the ground) In this position he is able to manipulate the strings perfectly. However, because other drums in the *ìyáàlù* sub-family ensemble are not meant for strings manipulation, they are not restricted to this position. This position does not apply to the *gángan* drummer as well.

2.4.4. Authenticity in the context of music construction

Another element of authenticity is the way in which the music is constructed. The *dùndún* is the name of the music performed on the combination of the hourglass tension drums called the *dùndún*. What this means is that the *dùndún* music is not underpinned by a definite repertoire. However, reflecting on my discussion with some practitioners in Nigeria, before a piece of music can be regarded as *dùndún* music the ensemble must include *ìyáàlù dùndún*⁹. The *ìyáàlù dùndún* is often called the *dùndún* with or without other members of the ensemble, whereas other drums cannot be called the *dùndún*. Therefore, the music that the ensemble produces is named after *ìyáàlù dùndún* that owns the ensemble. It creates repertoire and sets the pace, whilst other secondary instruments play different types of continuous rhythm, therefore creating interlocked rhythms within the concept of call and response.

A call and response is a succession of two distinct phrases usually played by two or many drummers, where the second phrase is heard as a direct commentary on or response. The secondary instruments in the *dùndún* ensemble build up an *ostinato* and the *ìyáàlù dùndún* improvises and carries out its main role. In this way the music becomes polyrhythm. This is the authentic form of the *dùndún* drumming tradition. However, this element of authenticity within the tradition of a particular culture is the innovative in another. The polyrhythmic

⁸ Please see the pictures of an *ìyáàlù* drummer at the back of this chapter.

⁹ This is the view of Hasan Àyànyemi, my informant in Ilé-Ifè, Nigeria.

devices, which later become the important characteristic of Stravinsky's music, have been an important feature of traditional African music from time immemorial. This is because "there are always at least two rhythms going on" (Chernoff, 1979:42) at the same time in African music generally.

However, to European audiences who were brought up on a different tradition, the idea of several rhythms in Stravinsky's music was seen as evidence of originality and became an important element that differentiates his music from Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Hence, the European people catapult him to the limelight as the innovator of a new style. For me as a *dùndún* drummer, Stravinsky did not create anything new. What the European sees as originality is an old tradition in the African musical culture, but little or no attention was paid to this. In this context, an element of tradition in one culture can be an element of originality in another.

Another strand of authenticity rests in the contexts in which the *dùndún* is used. The *dùndún* music and drums are not restricted to any specific occasion; virtually any occasion that calls for rejoicing and merry making is a potential opportunity for the *dùndún*. I have to state that music is only allowed at the burial of old people who, the Yorùbá believe, are joining the ancestors; it is an abomination to perform the *dùndún* or any form of music at the death of a young person.

The other context of the *dùndún* music is the community festivals. There are two types of music usually; the ritual music forms an integral part of the religious observance and it is usually performed on ritual drums by the devotees at the shrines or secret places. These are the drums that I mentioned earlier. The secular music is not connected to the ritual/religion; it

is meant for the celebration of the common values once the actual ritual is over. The community festival is celebrated as a secular event and it can accommodate various art forms and music ensembles.

2.4.5. Authenticity in the context of the spiritual belief

Another area of authenticity is the spiritual belief surrounding the *dùndún* drum. I will reflect on the received wisdom and supplement this with available literature. The relationship between the *dùndún* and the practitioners starts from the construction of the drum and lasts a lifetime, though practitioners do not carve the drum themselves. According to the oral tradition and some of my informants in Nigeria, a *dùndún* carver does not use an ordinary tree. How do we explore the assumptions that underpin the relationship between Yorùbá people and their beliefs? An understanding of the Yorùbá worldview is crucial to this.

In the Yorùbá worldview, there are three worlds and they represent the past, present and future. Okagbue (2007) has also identified the same concept in the Igbo¹⁰ culture. The first is the world of the dead, comprising the divinities, ancestors and spirit beings. Though the inhabitants of this world are dead, the Yorùbá believe they live in the spirit world and they are divine. The second is the world of the living – humans, animals, plant and other living objects and the third is the world of the unborn (babies in their mothers' wombs). The world of the dead and unborn exists on the spiritual plane and the world of living exists on the physical. Nonetheless, "the Yorùbá do not make too clear a distinction between them" (Awolalu, 1996:20). They are mutually complementary and dependent.

¹⁰ Igbo is another big ethnic group in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the Yorùbá believe that every object or phenomenon has both spiritual and material aspects and all natural forces such as trees, plants, animals, rocks, thunder, rain, earthquakes and rivers have spirits and they can influence human events. Hence, every Yorùbá man “accepts and celebrates the primacy and supremacy of the world of the dead over the world of the living” (Okagbue, 2007:18). This is reflected in the process of carving the *dùndún* drum.

The *dùndún* carvers use *igi ayùnré* (*Albizzia Gummifera* tree) for the construction of the *dùndún* drums because; “it is soft and easily carved into spoons, images, etc.” (Abraham, 1958:86). Furthermore, *igi ayùnré* is usually big and it is a common belief of the Yorùbá that every big tree is inhabited by the spirits. These spirits play a significant role in the *dùndún* drumming tradition as we shall see later. They are believed to be powerful; hence ritual is the medium through which the Yorùbá negotiate with them. This divine relationship makes the construction of the *dùndún* drum effortless.

Nonetheless, there are certain things that the drum carver must observe before choosing an *igi ayùnré* for the construction of the *dùndún* drum. The first thing is that the tree must be by the road path in the forest where the inhabiting spirits are able to listen to passers-by and sometimes pass comments about them. The belief is that any drum made from such trees will be able to talk and pass comments about people.

The second thing is the gender identity of the tree. The carver must make sure that the actual *igi ayùnré* is *akọ* (a male). Only an *akọ* (male) tree, which is believed to be inhabited by the spirits, can be used for the construction of a *dùndún* drum. How can we identify the gender of a tree? According to the received wisdom, an *akọ* tree usually has a big hole within it, which

could be interpreted as the entrance of the spirits to their place of abode. The second feature is that water sometimes runs on the tree and this is usually visible on the ground. This can be interpreted as the water that the spirits in the tree use. The third feature is the tree lighting up at night. I have also heard and seen some *ako* trees that produce flames.

This shows that there is an activity going on in the tree, which is why “the tree must not be cut down till the vengeance of the indwelling tree-spirits has been propitiated by offering of a fowl and palmwine” (Abraham, 1958:57). This provides the forum for dialogue between the world of the dead and the living. However, because of the supremacy of the world of the dead over the world of the living, permission to fell a tree is always needed from the indwelling spirits. This is usually granted after performing an appropriate ritual. Nonetheless, “the tree is not felled immediately...the carver must wait for two to three days before returning to the felling” (Euba, 1990:119). By not felling immediately after the ritual, the indwelling spirits demonstrate their supremacy. Furthermore, the three-day gap provides the spirits enough time to find another place of abode.

After carving the tree in the shape of the *dùndún* drum, the practitioner then buys the shell. He thanks the carver and the spirits that left the tree and also gives reverence to all the components that make the *dùndún* drum. He treats the drum just like a human being; this attitude fosters the continuity of the relationship between the two worlds. This attitude seems to be missing in western culture. “Sadly, in the West the loss of the connection with the natural world has been reflected in the way we treat and regard instruments” (Boyce-Tillman, 2007:208). This is blamed on the fragmented culture of the West, as they place a higher value on technology than on environment. However, an example of the West waking to the problem of environment is the campaign on the issue of global warming.

We can see that the process of carving the *dùndún* drums follows a long tradition, which authenticates the *ìyáàlù dùndún* and differentiates it from other talking drums around the world. If I reflect on the drum that the director of the ‘Drum4Fun’ organisation presented to me for my birthday in April 2005, I can see that some of this strand of authenticity was missing in its construction. All the strands in the process of carving the drum are cultural texts and they carry their own symbolic meanings. Once these are missing in a drum called ‘talking drum’, it becomes ‘deaf’ and ‘dumb’ and subsequently loses its values and power. The practitioners will also lose their power because their empowerment is constructed around the power of the drum.

The *dùndún* practitioners have power in the Yorùbá musical culture as a result of the social construction which I talked about earlier. Their social status is underpinned firstly by the myths surrounding the origin of the drum, and secondly by their skills. The practitioners are artistically valued whilst performing. As a result of the myths around the drum, they are not obliged to prostrate for anyone, including the kings, though it can be argued that this is done to allow the fluidity of the event since their role is vital. Moreover, since the *dùndún* can only be played in an upright position, to prostrate while performing can be very uncomfortable.

Significantly, the practitioners are traditionally respected in the course of performance because of the myth surrounding the creation of the *dùndún*. The myth is that the *dùndún* drum is Àyàn Àganlú, the Yorùbá god of drumming. This is the knowledge that has received the stamp of truth and which has become the prevailing value system within the Yorùbá musical culture. What this means is that the *dùndún* has multiple identities, it is a drum, a person, a living being, a god, a spirit and an influential phenomenon. This knowledge consequently becomes a source of power for the practitioners in the course of performance:

A drummer in the act of drumming is considered a sacred person and is immune from assaults and annoyances-nor must he be interrupted; they are not as a rule regarded as sacred persons, but while engaged in the actual act of drumming, they are protected by the privileges of sacred persons” (Danquah, 1928:2)

The *dùndún* is a symbol of authority and it is this that empowers the practitioners. It is the *dùndún* that acts as a spiritual insignia on every occasion where the practitioners are present. In the course of a performance, a *dùndún* drummer has a human and a semi-divine identity. However, the Yorùbá chooses to prize the semi-divine identity of the practitioners higher than their human identity, and because they are accorded the same respect as Àyàn Àganlú, the god of drumming, they become powerful.

For the practitioners to exercise their power, they draw upon the discourse that allows their action to be constructed in an acceptable way. They can play the drum to abuse, to console, to advise, to cause a problem and even to instigate a war. Whatever a *dùndún* drummer does while performing, it is conceived of as the god doing it. The conclusion we can draw from this is that, as long as the Yorùbá believe that men are inferior to gods, it is most likely that the *dùndún* drummers will continue to enjoy their absolute power during performances.

However, outside the performance context “the *dùndún* drummer hardly enjoys the kind of adulation showered on musical celebrities in places like Europe and America” (Euba, 1990:95). This is because their empowerment does not reside in their human identity. They lose their empowerment and semi-divine identity when they are not performing. On the other

hand; the treatment and respect given to a *dùndún* drum remains even when it is not in use because its empowerment is embedded in it.¹¹ These are the positions of the *dùndún* practitioners during and outside the performance context. The following paragraphs examine another aspect within the training process of the *dùndún* drummers.

2.4.6. Authenticity in the context of practitioners' gender

Gender is also important as an element of authenticity in the *dùndún* drumming tradition. The art of drumming is a family profession in Yorùbá society. This tradition makes the genealogical lineage of the *dùndún* drummers traceable and the profession durable. As part of the *dùndún* drumming tradition, a male child from an Àyàn family automatically becomes a young Àyàn, unless he shows no interest. He inherits his father's skills and the duties of a drummer are passed onto him.

It is important to note here that the arts of drumming amongst the Àyàn family are meant for male children. The Yorùbá culture forbids the female children of Àyàn to train as *dùndún* drummers and actually play it¹². Generally, the Yorùbá culture considers it inappropriate for women to take on drumming as a profession¹³. The rest of this section will discuss the possible reasons for this and how these are grounded in a myth to keep Yorùbá women from the drumming profession.

¹¹ Another reason why I think *dùndún* drummers are not respected is that they often perform without a formal invitation. This practice makes people label them *alágbe* - the beggars. In 2006, during my field trip to Nigeria I had a discussion with a three-man band in Ilé-Ifè during the convocation ceremony at Obafemi Awolowo University. They told me that they came to that ceremony from Ibadan, a city which is about 100 kilometres from Ife. This is how they travel around looking for ceremonies that demand drumming, which is seen as begging. However, those who play the *gangan* drum for modern dance bands like *jùjú*, *fújì*, highlife, *wákà* and *àpàlà* are not usually called beggars. The talking drum they play is no longer in the idiom of the *dùndún* drumming tradition; it has its own tradition which authenticates the style of the music they play. The bands are usually well organised and consist of western and indigenous musical instruments. The integration of the two different musical cultures has created a number of musical genres in Nigeria. This is evidence of recontextualisation of the *dùndún* in its cultural domain.

¹² During my fieldwork to Nigeria in 2006, I learnt that there were two female talking drummers. This new development has been discussed in the appendix at the back of this thesis.

¹³ However, I have seen women playing some handheld instruments like *agogo* (gong or bell), *agbè* (gourd) and *sèkèrè* during their recreational meetings before in Ilé-Ifè.

One possible reason which I think many Yorùbá will also suggest, is the notion of cleanliness on the part of women. As I mentioned earlier, the traditional Yorùbá drums are ritual drums and they are considered holy and sacred to the *Òrìsà*. Therefore, to keep the sacredness of the ritual drums, anything or anyone regarded as unclean is banned from touching them or even getting close to them. In the Yorùbá culture, women are considered to be unclean during their monthly period.

The Yorùbá believe that if they touch the drums in their monthly period they might defile the sacredness of the ritual drums. It is for this reason that women are banned from drumming or touching any traditional medicine. However, to justify the claim and also to keep the sacredness of the drum, a myth about the monthly period of women was created. The myth is that the monthly period of any women who touch the ritual drums will dry up.

What makes Yorùbá women fall victim to this myth is that in the Yorùbá culture having children is very significant to women because of the social stigma attached to barrenness¹⁴. The traditional religion does not believe in the idea that a man can be infertile. The Yorùbá believe that only women can be infertile. The issue of infertility in the Yorùbá culture is grounded in their belief in the influence of the world of the unseen spirits. Firstly, barrenness is believed to be a sign of anger directed towards women either by gods or witches. Secondly, barrenness is also often seen as a result of the woman's wrong choices earlier in her life, which is why an average Yorùbá woman will do everything possible to avoid any reproach¹⁵.

Since, touching or playing the ritual drums has been associated with barrenness, this makes Yorùbá women distance themselves from the drumming profession completely. Given that

¹⁴ This is why goddesses such as Oshun, Oluweri and Yemoja are very popular among the Yorùbá women. They are goddesses of fertility, which are believed to be givers of children.

¹⁵ The assumption is that such women have had a number of abortions in their early life.

the Yorùbá is a patriarchal society, I assume that this myth was created by men to disempower Yorùbá women musically and also to make men keep their dominance in society. In this context, this myth can be termed a social dominance strategy.

However, having said that, young women who have not started their monthly period and those who have passed child bearing age can be exempted from this ban. The important thing here is the monthly period, which the Yorùbá see as unclean, but which in actual fact is the source of the production of life. Furthermore, women who belong to any traditional religious gatherings, irrespective of their monthly period, can play any drums that are associated with their belief. They draw their power from the myths surrounding their belief. Additionally, those girls who attend unmixed schools can play any available musical instruments, including a talking drum.

Music in education is understood and defined in a different context from the traditional context of the *dùndún*. It is structured and overseen by the state and therefore not controlled by the tradition of any particular group of people such as the *dùndún* practitioners. As a result of this, any musical instruments can be played in the school by the pupils irrespective of their gender. The exercise of the values of the prevailing government within the school system allows indigenous musical traditions to be modified to fit a different value system. It sometimes eliminates indigenous traditions altogether.

Reflecting on what I was told in Nigeria during my field trip, I learnt that there were two female talking drummers, Àrà and Àyánbínrin. They both started drumming when they were at school and their music had interesting characteristics. They fused singing and dancing with acrobatic display. They both played the *gangan* drums and supplemented them with other

non- *dùndún* drums played by their ensembles. Their practices drew widespread criticism from many people (mostly men) including scholars. Despite their talent, they were not recognised as practitioners. This is because gender plays an important role in the notion of authenticity. In the *dùndún* drumming tradition, talent is important only within a gender paradigm, which is why I am a practitioner. A male descendant of Àyàn family is also Àyàn irrespective of whether he plays the drum or not. A female descendant of Àyàn can only be 'Àyàn' through a family name. Similarly, a wife of a male descendant of Àyàn can only be 'Àyàn' by acquiring the family name of her husband.

2.4.7. Authenticity in the context of the training

Another area of authenticity is in the training of the young Àyàn. This is rich and specific. Since the *dùndún* drumming runs through the family, instruction is given to him also outside the performance context. He acquires his proficiency through inheritance. It is a common assumption that a son of Àyàn already has the blood trait in his body. However, this is not always the case as I know a young Àyàn who could not play a drum. The only fact is that the day-to-day exposure of a young Àyàn who has an interest in the profession enhances his drumming skills. He is able to learn with ease and this makes his training faster than non-Àyàn children.

A young Àyàn begins his training from an early age of about five or six by accompanying his father, uncle or members of the family to public performances. He develops his skills by listening and observing his elders who will later become his instructors. In the Yorùbá culture, watching and observing is the fundamental method of learning, which could be seen as passive rather than active in western culture. I built up my drumming skills in the same way by watching the *dùndún* drummers during various community events. The formal

training of a young Àyàn builds on this. However, because of the complexity of the *dùndún* drum, the training of a male Àyàn takes a definite order.

Rhythm is one of the most profound aspects of music making in Africa. It is the most fundamental aspect of drumming and is the first area to which a young Àyàn is introduced. According to the received wisdom, a young Àyàn starts to learn a single and steady rhythm on *gúdúgúdú*. The “*gúdúgúdú* is a difficult instrument to play; it requires concentration and stamina to sustain lengthy performance” (Olaniyan, 1993:56). It also requires flexibility of arms in that it is usually worn on the neck and played with two drum sticks.

The basic rhythm commonly associated with the *gúdúgúdú* is encapsulated in a mnemonic, *bó tán ma tún roko* (if it finishes, I go to the farm¹⁶). In most cases the young Àyàn is given this phrase verbally. Nketia acknowledges this: “the instruction was not always on drums...instructor spoke rhythms” (Nketia, 1954: 40). He is then asked to say it with his mouth because if you can say it, you can play it. He plays what he says repeatedly until he becomes a master of that rhythm.

According to Olaniyan (1993), after various rhythms on *gúdúgúdú*, the young Àyàn progresses to *omele akọ* (male child) and then *omele abo* (female child) after which he moves to *kẹríkẹrí*. However, Ajayi (1988) says *kànnàngó* is the next drum to be trained on after *gúdúgúdú*. All these drums require the manipulation of tensioning strings. At first, the tensioning strings of the twin drums (*omele akọ* and *omele abo*) are tied in the middle to give a fixed pitch.

¹⁶ There is a folk song that says *ẹgẹ* (cassava) is the vegetable referred to here that if it finishes I go to the farm to get another.

A young Àyàn learns to alternate with another drummer on *omele* with a basic and repetitive rhythm. This technique is the first thing to learn when training on all secondary instruments of the *dùndún*. In this way, the two *omele* engage in call and response, a communication pattern which is also the basic element of African music. All the drums play different rhythmic patterns that are inter-locked, and it is possible to have the clear sense of who is responding to which call. This cross-rhythms technique is found in all Yorùbá music.

When the strings are finally released, a young Àyàn learns to play various rhythms of different tones by pulling the strings and pressing the drum against his left or right hip (depending on his strong hand) in order to determine the pitch of the drum. He learns how to increase or decrease the intervals between these tones and how to create various *àlùjò*¹⁷ for different occasions. The ability to change the drum's pitch is analogous to the language tonality of Yorùbá; this I will explain later.

The training on *ìyáàlù dùndún* is unique and complex, as it is the only drum that talks in the ensemble. As a result, the time a young Àyàn spends on *ìyáàlù dùndún* is sometimes much more than he does with other secondary instruments. The first main task is to get acquainted with the *ìyáàlù dùndún* drum, as it is bigger in size and also deeper in voice. He learns to pull and to release the strings to produce varieties of pitches as dictated by the Yorùbá tonal language. I trained on the *gáangan*, as I did not have an *ìyáàlù dùndún* drum. Moreover, it was my aspiration to play for King Sunny Ade, the king of Nigerian *jùjú* music, and *gáangan* is the principal drum in his band.

¹⁷ This is dance music; it is an occasional rhythm that is played whilst music is going on. It is meant to create a special response from the dancers and musicians. The relationship between the drummer and the dancers in that moment is usually very dramatic.

We have established authenticity within the *dùndún* drumming tradition in the contexts of the identity of the practitioners, the training of the practitioners, the construction of the music and drum. So, where does originality sit in the *dùndún* drumming tradition?

2.5. Strands of originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition

Originality is also built into the structure of the *dùndún* drumming tradition. Originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition, like authenticity, is closely linked to creativity. Thus, originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition is defined as the continuous creativity of the practitioners during the performance. I will reflect on some of these creative techniques in the following section.

2.5.1. Originality in the context of improvisation

One of the strands of originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition is improvisation. Generally, improvisation is very important in African music. It is embedded in the tradition in a particular way which frees it from some of the debates surrounding musical improvisation in Western culture as expressed by Bailey in his book on *Improvisation*:

Defined in any one of a series of catch-phrases ranging from ‘making it up as he goes along’ to ‘instant composition’, improvisation is generally viewed as a musical conjuring trick, a doubtful expedient, or even a vulgar habit (Bailey, 1980:1-2).

Cahn observes that “improvisation is typically not included as a formal part of training for most musicians in music schools, except maybe for those who study Jazz or perhaps baroque ornamentation and figured bass” (Cahn, 2005:23). Improvisation can be regarded as the least

acknowledged and understood aspect of Western musical culture. It is often linked with originality. To improvise is to compose, recite, play or sing extemporaneously – to bring something about without previous preparation and to create on the spur of the moment. Jacobs also (1963) says that to improvise is “to perform according to spontaneous fancy, not from memory or from written copy” (Jacob, 1963: 177). These definitions can be problematic for the *dùndún* drumming tradition.

Firstly, I want to argue that spontaneity is not the only characteristic of improvisation. Others include playing off the beat of the whole music, moving from one scale to another with slight exaggeration, shortening the phrases, and applying a drum roll. If improvisation is truly to bring about without previous preparation as Jacobs suggests, then one can argue that no one really improvises. This is because all the moments that build up to the time of improvisation are having some effect on the result. They are prompting the drummer to improvise, which suggests to me that there is a conscious planning, related directly to improvisation.

One can also argue that a *dùndún* drummer does not improvise because the practitioners play the phrases they have already learnt in a particular order. If improvisation is conceptualised as a device for originality as I said earlier, we can also say that there is no originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition. Nonetheless, originality is an essential part of the *dùndún* drumming tradition. Firstly, the practitioners are not restricted to the phrases they have learnt, and secondly, the phrases never take a definite order. More importantly, since the essential factors in the *dùndún* drumming tradition are the feelings of the audience, the practitioners always respond to them by creating phrases within the melody of a piece of music and the performance context to express ideas which often produce, or elicit gratifying emotional

responses from the audience. So when the drummers create in this way, they are being original.

The already learnt cultural phrases form part of the idiomatic improvisation in the *dùndún* drumming tradition. Bailey (1980) also identifies this in most musical traditions – western and non-western. Idiomatic improvisation is embedded within the musical idiom of a particular culture. Hence, “the requirement and limits of improvisation are generally accepted and understood by virtually all performers and listeners in that idiom” (Cahn, 2005:24). The messages are understandable to the people of the same culture because of the shared values.

I will define improvisation as a combination of regular and irregular, but melodious, rhythms played spontaneously within a piece of music, not necessarily for the purpose of reciting phrases, but to elevate the music and elicit reaction from the audience and/or dancers. This definition gives birth to a ‘theory of nonsense’, which I explored with members of the African Drumming Ensemble in 2005 at the University of Winchester. As a turn in the Action Research Spiral, I will reflect on the action of that day below.

On that very day, I told the members that we would be exploring the concept of improvisation in African drumming. The response was great, as they all knew or were familiar with the concept of improvisation. Nonetheless, it was still very difficult for them to apply this to drumming. Whilst they struggled to understand how improvisation could be applied, so also I struggled to find a way to pass my acquired knowledge onto them¹⁸.

¹⁸ I did not learn improvisation in a book; it is something I grew up with. I would like to say that the majority of the traditional drummers in Africa do not have any western education. Therefore, all the musical terminology in the western concept will mean nothing to them even though they are using the techniques intuitively. It is this assumption that sparked a theory in my mind called “nonsense”, which I explored with the group. This later helped them in their understanding of how someone can improvise easily.

One can define 'nonsense' as something or a word that does not mean anything. However, if we further analyse the situational context and the motif behind a particular action, it may be possible to read a meaning to it. For example, a clown can ridicule himself or behave foolishly in order to entertain people. The meaning of his foolishness and nonsense can be found in the happiness of others. If we finally succeed in reading a meaning to what we previously regarded as nonsense, then it becomes good nonsense. This means that one can make sense out of nonsense by focusing on the end result.

To explain this concept, I asked each person to play anything on the drum and then asked them to explain to me what they thought they had played. As anticipated, they all said that they had played nonsense rhythms. I later told them to imagine themselves playing those nonsense rhythms occasionally while the music was going on. They all alarmingly responded that they could not do it; their fear was that they would destabilise the whole music. I had already told them something about fundamental rhythm. This is the basic and steady rhythm which an individual drummer plays as part of a piece of music and which precedes improvisation. In an ensemble, two or more people can play the same fundamental rhythm.

We finally settled down with a well known melodious tune in which everybody had his or her pattern of fundamental rhythm. Whilst this was going on, I invited each person to play his/her nonsense rhythm and return to his/her individual fundamental rhythm. They all did this successfully without causing others to stop or lose their various rhythms. They later became the advocates of the idea of 'bad and good nonsense' to new learners and members of the group.

Three things are vital to this theory – firstly, “one must know the basic melodic arrangement” (Olaniyan, 1993:60) of the ongoing piece of music. Secondly, a mastery of one’s fundamental rhythm is vital. Lastly, one must know how to return to the fundamental rhythm neatly. To this end, improvisation is an act of creativity which can only be achieved by a professional drummer. I will now illustrate the variety of techniques that a professional drummer learns to inform his improvisation.

2.5.2. Originality in the context of variation

Another element of originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition is variation. It is a good technique a young Àyàn needs to learn to be able to qualify as a master drummer. Variation takes place when rhythms are repeated in an altered form. It is a creative technique, which makes it an important element of originality. The essence of variation is to avoid monotony, to sustain the interest of the listeners and dancers, to keep the eyes of the onlooker focused, and also to enhance and intensify the relationship between the musicians and the listeners.

However, before a young Àyàn can accomplish all these, he will have to know how to play the original version of the phrase and recognise the likely variation of the rhythm. He will then need to keep the variation clear enough for people to notice the difference. If he creates the phrases himself, he will also need to know the possible variation. The various forms of variation on the *ìyáàlù dùndún* will depend on how conversant someone is with the rhythms, tonal line, syllabic structure and phrase construction. I will shed more light on all these under the interpretation of the *dùndún* texts.

2.5.3. Originality in the context of retrogression

Retrogression is a creative and complex technique that requires a high level of concentration. This is the act of retrograding; the act of playing the same melodic phrase or part of it in a reverse order. For example, A B C D E becomes E D C B A. The beauty of this technique cannot be fully expressed on paper. Retrogression can be similar to the alternating technique played by both *omele abo* and *omele akọ*. However, while they alternate a single phrase, a young Àyàn training on *ìyáàlù* plays the same phrase backwards. My experience shows that many people learning drumming often encounter problems in playing a rhythm backwards, particularly when the phrase is very long.

For instance, some members of the African Drumming Ensemble often found it difficult to cope with this technique. The common problem was that they tended to concentrate too much on the rhythms and also often applied the western musical concept by counting the beats. This can only help the drummer to remember the number of beats or strokes. However, in retrogression, reproducing the exact tones and pitch is more important. What the *dùndún* drummers do is that they use mnemonics or say the tones to make them remember the rhythms. This is how I learnt to use this technique.

2.5.4. Originality in the context of truncation

Truncation is another important element of originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition. This important technique is equally difficult; it requires a high level of expertise. Truncation occurs when a phrase is shortened in order to create a space for the following phrase, therefore making rhythmic sense of the musical idea. Since timing is very important in music, a young Àyàn learns to shorten his phrases in an appropriate time so that the new phrases can

be played within the rhythm he intends to play. The following paragraphs examine how tones can be identified on the *ìyáàlù dùndún* and *gáangan*, the two talking drums in their ensembles.

2.6. How to identify desired tones on the *dùndún*

The *ìyáàlù dùndún* is a very complex, technical and breath-taking drum. This is also the view of all my informants in Nigeria. Its complexity lies in the playing technique; the drummer uses his imagination to locate the tones on the drum. The *dùndún* and *gáangan* are played by holding enough breath. The drummer then simultaneously uses his imagination to identify the desired tones in his mind and holds his breath at that level before locating this on the drum. He then gradually releases his breath as he strikes the drum with the stick. If he releases his breath before striking the drum, there is a possibility of losing the desired tones.

In the same way, he cannot talk while trying to find or playing the appropriate tones for the phrases. Otherwise, he will not be able to play the phrase correctly. This is encapsulated in a Yorùbá proverb: *a lu dùndún kì í dárin* (a *dùndún* drummer cannot play and talk/sing at the same time). In essence, the drum says what a drummer should have said with his mouth. However, a professional drummer may not need to hold his breath before identifying desired tones. Nonetheless, he is not able to play and talk at the same time.

One of the skills needed to play the *ìyáàlù dùndún* is the combination of a drumming stick and the hand. This combination produces distinct sharp notes, which a dancer usually responds to either by kicking his or her leg(s) or using any other part of his body. This ‘punctuation note’ is called *ìrélù* and it is mostly in-between *àlùjó*. Apart from the punctuation notes, the *ìyáàlù* drummers in moments of excitement occasionally use their hand to hit the drum with or without the stick.

The *gangan* drummers use their fingertips to create nasalised tone whilst playing. This also is expressed in a Yorùbá proverb: *à ti ránmú gangan, kò sèhìn èékánná* (to produce a nasalised tone on the *gangan* it is not without the use of finger nails). According to Euba (1990), a nasalised tone is produced on the *iyáàlù dùndún* through the help of a large number of *saworo* affixed round the necks of the drum, which produces a snare effect when touching the skin of the drum. The following paragraphs discuss the sources of texts and phrases in the *dùndún* drumming tradition.

2.7. Sources of texts and phrases used by the *iyáàlù dùndún*

Nketia (1954) acknowledges that: “a good knowledge of tribal history is a pre-requisite of drummers of the talking drum” (Nketia, 1954: 38). Thus:

drummers should become acquainted with the
heroic deeds of our glorious dead, and they
should be versed in the traditions of the country
to strengthen their knowledge of the lyrical, heroic
and eulogistic verses used in drumming
(Danquah, 1928:51).

The Yorùbá is a poetic nation; a *dùndún* or *gangan* practitioner gets the materials for his texts and phrases from Yorùbá literature. He acquires some of these through the in-depth knowledge of *oríkì* (descriptive poetry). This can be sub-divided into four; *oríkì ilú* (descriptive poetry of towns and cities), *oríkì idílẹ̀* (descriptive poetry of families or lineages), *oríkì orúkọ* (descriptive poetry for names) and lastly, *oríkì isẹ̀* (descriptive poetry that relates to what someone does for a living). Other materials include *òwe* (proverbs), *orin ibílẹ̀* (folk

songs, including rhymes) and *ìtàn ibílẹ̀* (traditional story). All this produces standard and well known texts and phrases. A large number of these materials are not written down. Therefore, active participation in community events is very essential for the *dùndún* practitioners.

The other materials come from the current affairs or contextual occurrences that often happen spontaneously during performances. These strands do not produce well known phrases, but stimulate or inspire the drummer to create his own phrases. The performance context sometimes determines the materials and their usage. Having the knowledge of the materials is not enough; it is also important for a young Àyàn to learn how to construct sentences using them. A young Àyàn begins to be “regarded and respected as a master drummer as soon as he becomes capable of choosing materials as texts from the basic literary sources for creating his music” (Olaniyan, 1993:56). He learns to put the materials into the syllabic structure using the three tonal pattern of the Yorùbá language, which will be examined later.

We can see that the “traditional music education continues throughout a drummer’s life span” (Ajayi, 1988:49). By the time a young Àyàn finishes all his training, he would have been a full grown adult. In contrast to all the stage by stage formal training, as a non Àyàn, I acquired the same skills; it was a process of ‘trial and error’. My involvement in *dùndún* is as a result of interest and talent.

2.8. The tonal and syllabic structure of the *dùndún*

This concept is about construction of meaning within the *dùndún* drumming tradition. The knowledge of the grammatical structure of the Yorùbá language is a prerequisite to understanding the syllabic structure of the *dùndún*, not just because the *dùndún* is a Yorùbá drum, but also because Yorùbá is a tonal language. The *dùndún* can speak all tonal languages.

A tonal language such as Yorùbá uses pitch to distinguish words. English is not a tonal language, though it uses tone or speech to distinguish between several possible senses in which a word or a group of words may be used in a given case, “English does not normally use pitch to distinguish from each other words otherwise homonymic” (Ong, 1977:98). Yorùbá does. Nonetheless, the *ìyáàlù dùndún* can speak English and all other non-tonal languages. I will discuss how this can be done later.

There are three contrastive tones in the Yorùbá language; low tone, middle tone and high tone. These tones are represented with three signs: DO (\) – low tone, RE (i.e. no sign) – middle tone, and MI (/) – high tone. However, for the sake of non-Yorùbá readers, I will represent these tones as: high – ‘H’, low – ‘L’, and middle – ‘M’. These three tone signs only apply to the seven Yorùbá vowel letters – a, e, ẹ, i, o, ọ, u; out of the twenty-five in the alphabet. Given the fact that there are three contrastive tones, one syllable may have a three way pitch contrast depending on the level of the pitch.

For example, Kọ (M) – build, Kọ (no tone) – sing, and Kọ (H) – reject. In this example, the words are distinguished only by the sign on the letters which invariably gives the meaning of the word. This means a single word could mean different things depending on its tone level. In addition, many words of the same intonation could mean different things. For example, the following words have the same intonation but are distinguished by their meanings:

ayé =	(H)	World
etí =	(H)	Ear
ilé =	(H)	Home or House

Since the *ìyáàlù dùndún* cannot enunciate syllables, it will render the three words in the same way because each syllable in a phrase is rendered according to their tonal patterns. The *ìyáàlù dùndún* divides the sentences or phrases into syllables according to their tonal patterns. In general, each syllable stands for a stroke; this is the commonly used stroke pattern, though Euba (1990) identifies another three out of which, only the use of one stroke for more than a syllable is likely to be used. This is illustrated below.

The drummer hits the drum once to produce the fundamental tone of the syllable, but whilst the overtones continue, he manipulates the strings to another desired tone level to give the next syllable. This is a unique feature of the *dùndún*; one can alter the tones of the overtones to give other tones different from the fundamental tones. In contrast, the fundamental tone on piano and overtones are the same, and cannot be altered in any way to give another tone.

The table below shows the syllabic structure of the first line of a familiar hymn, which I have played several times on the *dùndún*, ‘Oh Lord my God when I in awesome wonder’. This has eleven syllables according to the *dùndún* syllabic structure. The tones represent the Yorùbá tonal language with the English adaptation. The number of strokes is based on the standard pattern of a stroke per syllable. However, where the syllables are two, a good drummer can play it as a stroke by applying the aforementioned technique.

Lyrics	Oh	Lord	my	God	when	I	in	awesome (two syllables)	wonder (two syllables)
Adaptation	M	M	M	L	M	M	M	H H	L H
Yorùbá Tonal language	Re —	Re —	Re —	Do \	Re —	Re —	Re —	Mi Mi / /	Do Mi \ /
Number of strokes	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2

Fig. 4. The tonal and syllabic structure of ‘Oh Lord my God’

Another thing about the *dùndún* drumming tradition is that, before a *dùndún* drummer can play any song, he needs to memorise the lyrics and be familiar with the tones. The structure of the music is notated in the memory of the practitioners. It is about this aspect of education that Okafor writes that “even though the popular and social music practitioners were not given training in the rudiments of music and in musical composition, as in Western culture, they were highly skilled” (Okafor, 1988:12). The *dùndún* practitioners compose and arrange their music using traditional methods. This gives them the opportunity to embody the music and apply everything within their disposal to enhance the performance. This is not to suggest that western musicians do not embody the performance. The following paragraphs detail how the *dùndún* phrases are constructed and structured.

2.9. Èdè Àyàn: the language of the drum

The phrase ‘Èdè Àyàn’ within the *dùndún* drumming tradition is about construction of meanings. The *dùndún* is one of the mediums through which the Yorùbá communicate and “the practice of talking with drums has been carried to a high degree of perfection among the

Yorùbá” (Euba, 1990:191). The *dùndún* does not have a language of its own; it is the drummer who speaks through the drum. What this means is that if the drummer is English, the drum will be able to speak English.

As I have mentioned earlier, for the *ìyáàlù dùndún* or any talking drum to speak accurately, it needs a tonal language. This is also the view of Carrington (1949 & 1974) and Ong (1982). Nonetheless, I have come to realise through this investigation that the *ìyáàlù dùndún* can speak a non-tonal language such as English and this was tested in the prison amongst the inhabitants. The following section discusses how this can be done.

In order to make the *ìyáàlù dùndún* speak English, the drummer raises the pitch of certain words in the phrase to pass on his intended meaning. For the sake of illustration, I will use the following signs; — to mean the normal pitch and / to mean a higher pitch. For example, the phrase ‘it is wrong’ has one basic meaning to an English speaker. However, if the drummer wants it to mean a question, he raises the pitch of the word ‘wrong’, ‘it is wrong (/)?’ To make the phrase a declaration, he then lowers the pitch of the same word, ‘it is wrong (—)’. He can also counter a denial by raising the pitch of ‘is’ in the phrase, ‘it is (/) wrong’. Because English is not a tonal language, what a *dùndún* drummer plays in this context is his emotion. What is the practicality of this since the *dùndún* cannot show emotion?

The *dùndún* cannot show emotion; instead the drummer places emphasis on his emotion in order to convey his intended meanings. For example, if the syllabic structure of a phrase is six, he can show six emotions as he strikes the drum six times. He can choose to play the phrase correctly and simultaneously show his emotion. On the other hand, a drummer can choose not to worry about playing the phrase correctly, but still strikes the drum according to

the number of syllables in the phrase and allow his emotion to convey the message. This is what happened at HMP Portsmouth where one of the inhabitants played his emotion instead of the actual texts in the phrase.

With this illustration, what then is *èdè Àyàn*? The Yorùbá phrase *èdè Àyàn* has two philosophical meanings. Firstly, it means the language that the drum speaks during the performance – that is, the language spoken in the community where the drum is played because the drum can only communicate with the people in the language they understand. Secondly and significantly, it means the peculiar way the drum constructs and structures its phrases in order to facilitate talking and understanding. The “*dùndún* is unable to reproduce human speech in exact terms. What it does is to simulate enough of the elements of human speech to make itself intelligible” (Euba, 1990:194). This is what the Yorùbá call *èdè Àyàn*, the language of the drum.

Before anyone can interpret the *dùndún* phrases correctly, an understanding of how the *dùndún* constructs its own speeches is necessary because “a drum language is not understood *ipso facto* when one knows the spoken language it reproduces: drum language has to be specially learned even when the drums speak one’s own mother tongue” (Ong, 1977:94).

The *dùndún* has a characteristic speech of its own, which must be understood before correct interpretation can take place. The *dùndún* uses tones and rhythms as the basic elements for talking. As a musical instrument, “its speech function has been assimilated to its musical function” (Euba, 1990:192). This is why a *dùndún* phrase is usually rendered in a melodious speech rather than a text speech. Whenever the *dùndún* interprets ordinary speech or someone interprets a *dùndún* phrase the musical tones and rhythms are always the dominant factors.

This is because; “a considerable proportion of the pitches with which speech tones are expressed on the *ìyáàlù*, especially at the upper register, are clearly recognizable as musical tones” (Euba, 1990:196). The interpreter hears the phrase, not as ordinary speech, but as melodious speech. How then can one interpret the *dùndún* phrases correctly? This can be done by applying another philosophical concept called *etí ìlù*, ears of the drum.

2.10. *Etí ìlù*: the ears of the drum

The art of talking with the *ìyáàlù dùndún* is limited to the use of tones and rhythms, which is why “the message given by the drum is always ambiguous” (Ajayi, 2004:577). The interpretation of the *dùndún* phrases can be misleading as two different sentences of the same tones can sometimes be undifferentiated in their rendition on the drum. Ames and King (1971) also observe the problem of ambiguity in Hausa *taakee* drum, which functions as a talking drum; “a *taakee* drum message is often ambiguous and could correspond to a number of different Hausa phrases” (Ames and King, 1971:13). Nonetheless, the problem of ambiguity can be reduced by applying the concept of *etí ìlù*, which means the ability to discern, understand and interpret the exact phrase of the *dùndún*. To apply this concept, certain skills are necessary.

One of these is to understand the situation and the context in which a phrase is rendered; “it is the situation in which they are uttered or the overall verbal context in which they occur that enables us to interpret them correctly when they are played on the drum” (Euba, 1990:198). The *dùndún* functions in the social context and consequently some knowledge of the language of the drum is regarded as a social skill. Hence, Beier says that “the drum talk is clear to any educated Yorùbá” (Beier, 2002:10). An average Yorùbá is expected to be educated in his/her culture and tradition and be familiar with the various contexts in which

the *dùndún* is played and pithy sayings associated with these contexts. In a normal circumstance, “the situational context must resolve the ambiguity” (Stern, 1957:488). However, a Yorùbá man or woman who is totally ignorant of this is regarded as *òpè*, inept. In common parlance, *kò lé tí ilù* (he lacks the ears of the drum).

Another important skill is to have the general train of thought of the preceding and the following expression in a phrase, so that possible alternatives can be judged in terms of their logic, or otherwise, to the context even if the expression has an identical tonal pattern of another phrase. Once the context is known, the interpreter can establish the first part of the phrase and links this with the following part to reach a logical conclusion. Nonetheless, I have to say that the interpretation is not always correct.

In my experience, the *dùndún* practitioners often deliberately facilitate correct interpretation of the *dùndún* phrases by repeating some parts twice. Oladapo (1995) has also observed that most of the Yorùbá pithy sayings on *ìyààlù dùndún* consist of a two-sentence pattern. It shows that a consequent phrase is usually presented before its antecedent. Nketia (1964) has also observed the same in the musical culture of the Ga people in Ghana.

The first sentence is usually shorter than the second one and usually played twice. The second sentence is played once and the first sentence is then repeated again once. By the time the first sentence is established, the interpreter will be left with the second part of the phrase since the last part is usually the same as the first part. The interpreter follows the logic of the first part of the phrase to find the middle sentence, here is a good example:

Kí ló tún kù tí ó sọ (2x)

what else has he got to say (2x)

Eni tí a bé lórí tó tún jenu wúyẹ A beheaded person who still moves his mouth
Kí ló tún kù tí ó sọ what else has he got to say

If the interpreter cannot follow the speed of the rhythm to end the phrase with the drum, he leaves the second sentence on the way and finishes the last sentence with the drum. It must be said, however, that even though this two-sentence structure is common in Yorùbá and the *dùndún* musical phrases, it is freely disregarded under various circumstances such as the mood or feelings of the practitioners and interpreters.

Despite all these, those who lack *étí ilù* and the skills always look to the drummers to solve the problem of ambiguity. Their belief is encapsulated in a Yorùbá proverb; *kò sí ẹni tó mọ èdè Àyàn bí ẹni tó mọpà á ẹ lówọ, ẹni tó gbómele lówọ ló mohun tómele únsọ* (no one knows the language of the drums like the drummer holding the drum stick, it is the person who carries *omele* that knows what *omele* is saying). This assumption is a source of empowerment for the drummers who often manipulate people in the interpretation of the *ìyààlù dùndún* phrases. In a poem *Oníbodè Lálúpọn* (the gate keeper of Lálúpọn), Adebayo Faleti¹⁹ demonstrates the level of ambiguity in the *dùndún* phrases and how the practitioners manipulate people. This poem is written below with my own illustrations.

The *Oníbodè Lálúpọn* is a very ugly man who is horribly disfigured by his mouth. However, he is very generous as he gives money and palm-wine to a solo *dùndún* drummer who passes the gate of *Lálúpọn* everyday. The drummer, in return, beats some praises on his drum for *Oníbodè* as a sign of appreciation. However, some people, who claim to have the ears of the

¹⁹ *Lálúpọn* is a Yorùbá town in Nigeria Adebayo Faleti is a celebrated Yorùbá poet who is famous for the use of the Yorùbá language and I was lucky to work with him and play a leading role in his drama performance in the 90s when he was the Chairman of MAMSA in Akure, Ondo State Nigeria.

drum inform *Oníbodè Lálúpòn* that the drummer beats abusive utterances and not praises.

They interpret the drum's phrase for *Oníbodè* as:

Ẹ wẹ nu ìmàdò - Look at the mouth of the wart-hog

Ẹ wẹ nu ìsín - Look at the mouth of the minnows

Ẹ wẹ nu Oníbodè Lálúpòn - Look at the mouth of the gate-keeper of *Lálúpòn*

In the above phrase, the drummer is believed to have compared the disfigurement of *Oníbodè* with the look of the wart-dog and minnows. What makes *Oníbodè Lálúpòn* believe this interpretation is that abusing people is a common practice amongst the *dùndún* practitioners, irrespective of whether they are given money or not. This makes *Oníbodè Lálúpòn* believe the drummer is making reference to his ugly physical appearance. He becomes furious and decides to deal with the ungrateful *dùndún* drummer. However, in his defence, the drummer interprets his phrase as:

*Mo jẹun Èjìgbò*²⁰ - I ate the food at *Èjìgbò*

*Mo jẹun Ìwó*²¹ - I ate the food at *Ìwó*

Mo jẹun oníbodè Lálúpòn - I ate the food of *Oníbodè Lálúpòn*

To facilitate clear understanding and the similarities between the two interpretations, I have put the phrase in a table below.

²⁰ A Yorùbá town in Nigeria.

²¹ A Yorùbá town in Nigeria.

People's interpretation	<i>Ẹ</i>	<i>wenu</i>	<i>ìmàdò</i>	<i>ẹ</i>	<i>wenu</i>	<i>ìsín</i>	<i>ẹ</i>	<i>wenu</i>	<i>Oníbodè</i>	<i>Lálúpon</i>
Drummer's interpretation	<i>Mo</i>	<i>jẹun</i>	<i>Ẹ̀jìgbò</i>	<i>mo</i>	<i>jẹun</i>	<i>Ìwó</i>	<i>mo</i>	<i>jẹun</i>	<i>Oníbodè</i>	<i>Lálúpon</i>
No of syllables	1	2	3	1	2	2	1	2	4	3
Adaptation	M	M M	L L L	M	M M	L M	M	M M	M H M L	H H M
Yorùbá tonal language	Re	Re Re	Do Do Do	Re	Re Re	Do Mi	Re	Re Re	Re Mi Re Do	Mi Mi Re
Yorùbá Signs	—	— —	\\ \\	—	— —	\\ /	—	— —	— / — \\	/ / —
No of strokes	1	2	3	1	2	2	1	2	4	3

Fig. 5. The tonal and syllabic structure of *Oníbodè Lálúpon*

We can see that the tonal and the syllabic structure of the two phrases are the same. Hence, *Oníbodè Lálúpon* accepts the drummer's interpretation, and apologises for the wrong charge he (*Oníbodè*) levied against the drummer. The summary of Faleti's claim is that nobody can be definite about the meaning intended by the drummer.

The questions to be raised are, how are we sure that the interpretation of the drummer is also correct since there is no way he can prove it? Why do we rely on the interpretation of the drummer in the first instance? How can we disempower the drummers who often manipulate the *dùndún* phrases deliberately for their own personal reasons? For me, every interpretation that conforms to the intonation of a phrase should be accepted. Although, the problem of

ambiguity cannot be totally erased, it can be reduced. In their effort to minimize the problem of ambiguity, *Onisẹ̀kẹ̀rẹ̀* (the one who plays the shaker) in the ensemble usually functions as an interpreter (see fig. 12). However, if there is no *Onisẹ̀kẹ̀rẹ̀* in an ensemble, the role is usually performed by anyone who plays one of the secondary drums and who is able to combine the role with his drumming. I have to say that interpreting the *dùndún* phrases by a member of the ensemble is not essential.

2.11. Conclusion

The *dùndún* is a unique and versatile musical instrument and its music is diverse. What I have done here is that I have traced the origin of the *dùndún* and established it as a Yorùbá musical instrument based upon the meagre literature that exists, supplemented with my own research and socially-acquired knowledge and experience, both as a Yorùbá and a *dùndún* practitioner. The *dùndún* drumming tradition is rooted in the Yorùbá culture. It represents the Yorùbá world view and beliefs. Therefore, a presentation of the *dùndún* music is also a presentation of Yorùbá culture and values. It constructs part of the identity of the Yorùbá people and the practitioners, including me.

I have also examined authenticity and originality in the *dùndún* drumming tradition. As we have seen in this chapter, authenticity and originality are built around a number of traditions associated with the *dùndún*. We can also see in this chapter that the *dùndún* drumming tradition is enclosed with cultural meanings – from the construction of the drum to the interpretation of the phrases during the performance; all this can be situated in the model in Chapter One. The use of tones and rhythms to facilitate speech can create ambiguity in the interpretation of the *dùndún* phrases. This problem cannot be completely resolved;

nonetheless, it can be reduced as I have analysed in this chapter. The next chapter discusses the methodology to be employed in this investigation.



Fig. 6. The standing posture of an òyààlù dùndún drummer



Fig. 7. The playing position of the gáangan drum



Fig. 8. The author playing a *gangan* drum with his arm in a 'V' shape



Fig. 9. Two *sèkèrè* (shakers)



Fig. 10. A *gúdúgúdú* drum



Fig. 11. Two *gárgan* drums with drumming sticks called *òpá*



Fig. 12. *Onisèkèrè* interpreting the *ìyáàlù dùndún* phrases in Èdè in Nigeria



Fig. 13. Replicas of the Yorùbá ritual drums

Chapter Three

The Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter will focus on the methodological framework I have used for this investigation which examines part of my journey as a practitioner. This project is about the recontextualisation of the *dùndún* tradition in two churches and a prison in Hampshire, which involved active participation in drumming activities. This is a piece of Action Research, a qualitative methodology. This will make me theorise my practice and enable me to reflect on the significance of my experience and that of the participants during the drumming activities. Though Action Research emerged in the context of the development of teaching practice, it can be used by “the practitioner(s) in whatever profession is involved and it is research that seeks to bring about change in practices – changes, obviously, for the better” (Trimingham, 2002:59). I employed Action Research in this investigation in order to improve my practice as a *dùndún* practitioner and also to examine the change I may have had in the lives of the workshop participants.

3.2. Action Research (AR)

Action Research is a “complex, dynamic activity involving the best efforts of both members of communities or organization and professional researchers” (Greenwood and Levin, 1998:50). It is the practical activity that brings researchers together with practitioners. It associates research with practice, so that research informs practice and practice informs research. The primary aim of Action Research is to improve practice. Therefore, to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, researchers participate in the action:

Action Research seeks to bring together action and reflection,

theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities. (Reason and Bradbury, 2005:1).

Action Research puts the researcher at the centre of the investigation. Hence, my experience of ‘*action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others*’ (*ibid*) is vital. The relation between theory and practice makes the researcher involved in the object of research, until researcher and practitioner become synonymous. In Action Research, the researchers are involved in the action and, through reflection, their experience, as well as that of the participants in the action, ultimately affects the outcomes of the research. In this investigation, the data concerning the experience of the participants plays a significant part in the research outcomes.

Kurt Lewin is the man generally credited with coining the term ‘Action Research’. His approach to research is that which is oriented to problem-solving in social and organisational contexts with a positive result. It is a “comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action, and research leading to social action. Research that produces nothing but books will not suffice” (Lewin 1946, cited in Lewin 1948:202-3).

Below is Lewin’s spiral model for Action Research methodology, which I reproduced from Lewin (1948).

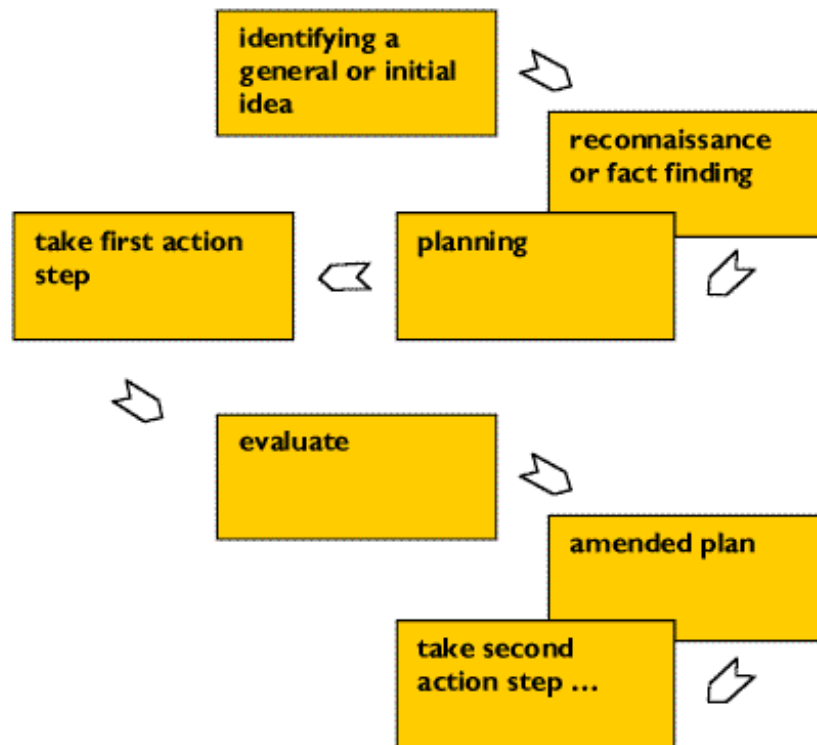


Fig. 14. Lewin's spiral model for Action Research methodology

The first step is to identify the area of research, and the real planning will be determined by the successful completion of the first two steps. Action then follows the planning. The original plan will then be modified as a result of the evaluation, and then the action continues, so there are likely to be a series of actions. The spiral cycle for this piece of investigation closely follows Lewin's idea and is written below:

- Planning – Re-planning
- Acting – Re-acting
- Observing – Re-observing
- Reflecting – Re-reflecting

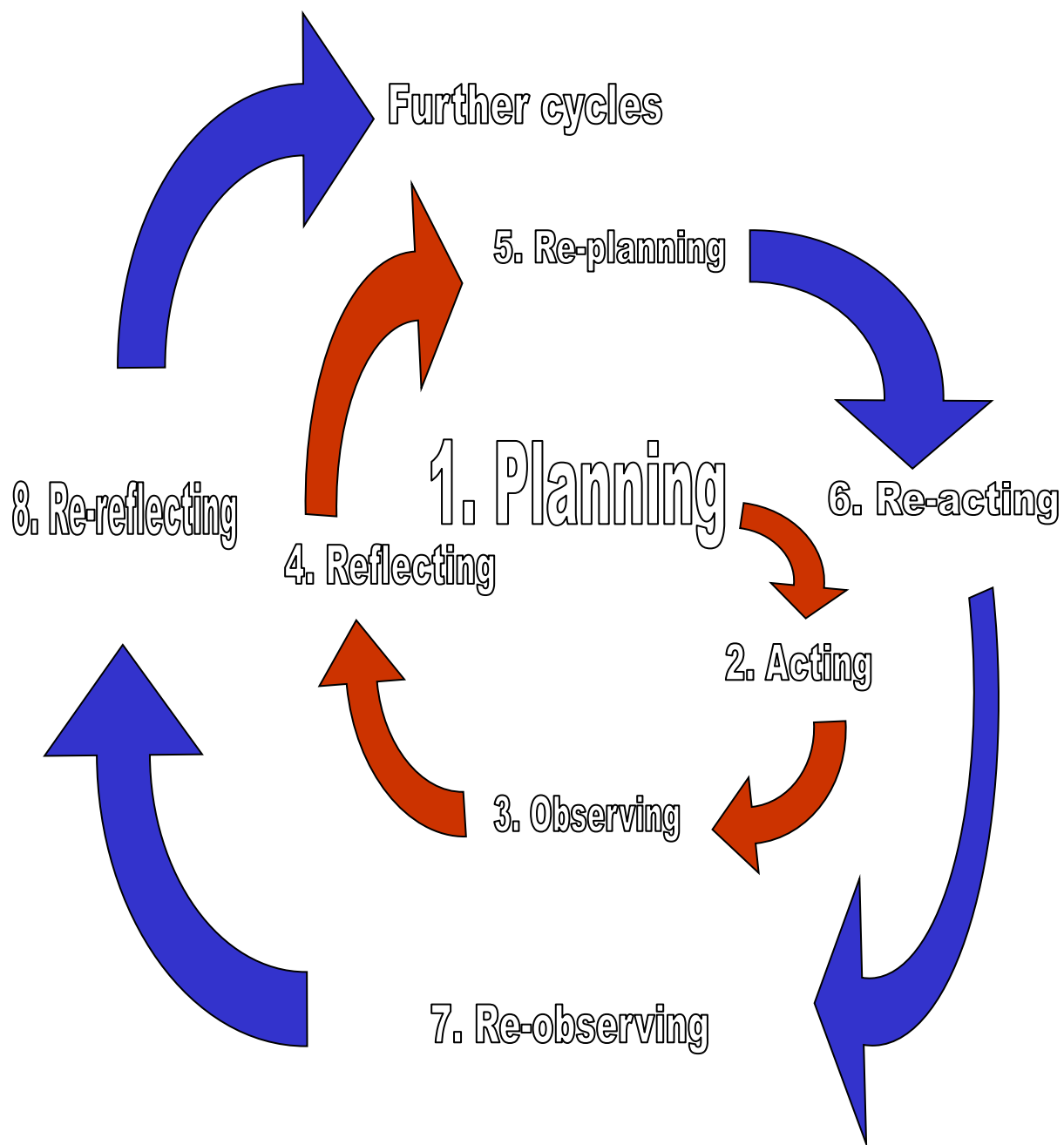


Fig.15. The Spiral cycle model

3.3. The Cycle of Planning

Firstly, I identified places where the *dùndún* could be recontextualised – two churches and a prison in Hampshire as the case studies for this research. I gathered all the necessary and available information about these two sets of institutions during the planning cycle. The planning cycle for the two case studies developed differently and this was reflected in their outcomes, which will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

As part of the planning cycle, literature was the first area which I employed in gathering the data for this research. Two fundamental forms of literature review, technical and non-technical have been used. Technical literature comprises:

reports of research studies and theoretical or philosophical papers characteristic of professional and disciplinary writing that can serve as background materials against which one compares findings from actual data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:35).

The aim of the technical literature review is to define the research and identify the previous work in the subject area in a broader perspective and place one's past experience as a researcher in the subject area into context. It sometimes points to an unexplored area or suggests a topic that is in need of further development. Also, the researcher might notice another approach to solve the same problem even though it has been well studied in the past. The researchers can identify the past methodology used in the investigation of the subject area and decide whether the same can be adapted or adopted for their own investigation.

In the case of this investigation, an ethnographic account of *dùndún* has already been researched comprehensively by Euba (1990) in his book *Yorùbá Drumming: The Dùndún Tradition*. However, there was no academic literature on the recontextualisation of the *dùndún*, which is happening in the process of globalisation. The review of the technical literature such as academic journals has helped me as a researcher to identify this. This included accessing a large range of academic material through online journals. This has provided access to such information which could inform literature to establish content validity in this investigation. Apart from the material gathered through established academic websites, other material found on the Internet was cautiously treated. I also verified the validity of such material through further research. As part of the plan for data collection for this research, the use of the Internet material has formed part of the technical literature review and this has been treated carefully.

Non-technical literature contains “materials that can be used as primary data, to supplement interviews and field observations, or to stimulate thinking about properties and dimensions of concepts emerging from data” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:35). I have employed the account of my personal journal as a form of non-technical literature. This was the only formal written form of material for me during the field work. My personal journal contained my thoughts about the workshops, group discussions and interviews with participants. I have analysed this through reflection. This is part of the planning cycle strategies that I adopted.

3.4. Action Cycle

In the research context, the action cycle can be defined as a series of practical activities that a researcher does in the field. The main action in this investigation was the series of *dùndún* drumming workshops, interviews and group discussions with interviewees and workshop

participants. I was not able to practice or perform with the bands in the two churches in Hampshire that made up the first case study as a result of certain issues. Therefore, the interviews and group discussions planned for the *dùndún* in the church context did not take place. I will discuss this in Chapter Four. The workshops did take place in the prison context and I was able to discuss their effects with the participants. I have discussed and analysed how this happened in Chapter Five.

Interviews and group discussions were other important actions that took place in the prison and during my field trip to Nigeria. The interview is part of a qualitative research methodology. It is defined as “a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information” (Cannell and Kahn, 1968:527). The interview can be with an individual or a group and can take place in a formal or informal setting.

There are different types of interviews, but the three most commonly used in the academic research setting are structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. In this research, I employed a semi-structured interview technique. This “is the most important form of interviewing in case study research” (Gillham, 2000:65). It involves the use of open ended questions in which both the interviewer and interviewee are able to adapt to the discussion. The setting is neither rigid nor too flexible and there are no restrictions on either the content or the manner of the interviewee’s reply. The interviewers ask a preset question and allow the interviewees to use their discretion. The interviewers can then draw out further questions from the interviewees’ responses.

S/he can ask the interviewee to clear any misunderstanding, to extend, elaborate, add to or provide detail for clarification. The interviewer can also clarify questions and topics for discussion before continuing. However, this does not mean that the interviewers will force or prompt the interviewees to give their desired responses; it is simply to enrich their data by encouraging depth and comprehensive responses and sometimes to test the consistency of the interviewees. There is a balance of power between the interviewer and interviewee. The semi-structured interview format encourages co-operation between the researcher and the respondent and develops a good rapport.

The semi-structured interview technique enabled me to draft the interview questions based on the research concepts already mentioned in Chapter One. The questions gathered during the study were either used before or after the workshops and performance. Though I sometimes imagined likely answers, these were not always as predicted. The workshops often generated further questions. This was due to further observation of the participants' body movements, facial expressions and moods. For example, after noticing the body language and facial expression of a prison inhabitant in Portsmouth, I asked him why he played the drum in a particular way, what he thought he had said with the drum, the reason why he had chosen a particular phrase, what was going on in his mind at that particular time, etc. In most cases, the follow up interview took place after I had listened to and analysed the initial interview content, and written up my personal journal. At the return workshop, I conducted another interview or adopted another productive way of gathering data, such as a group discussion.

A group discussion “presents a more natural environment than that of an individual interview because participants are influencing and influenced by others – just as they are in [real] life” (Kruegar & Casey, 2000:11). The group discussion does not require participants to take turns

or to contribute to the topic of discussion. I intentionally refrained from this as it could put people on the 'spot', and it might also have hampered the free flow of the discussion. The group discussion allows the participants to interact with each other and openly share their views and opinions. This can in turn make new discoveries possible, which may not be found in the structured interview.

This was my experience at HMP in Kingston, Portsmouth. The response to the discussion gave a fascinating insight into the group's dynamics. It allowed the inhabitants more time to reflect and recall experiences of the past, as someone else's response sometimes triggered an idea or opinion from others. The open disagreement was one of the strengths of this method, as it brought out tensions and eventually revealed their different stances on many issues.

The only weakness of a group discussion is that it can be inhibited by people of high status and such people can dominate the discussion, thereby turning the introvert and/or quieter people into mere spectators. To avoid this, I took the role of a moderator. Thus, I found myself in other roles such as chairing, moderating, observing the group and contributing to the discussion. This may be too complex as one role (the moderator) can inhibit the other (the researcher). Hence, the researcher can choose to become a non-participant observer. In my case, I chose to be a participant observer because I was at the centre of the investigation.

3.5. Observation Cycle

Observation involves "watching what people do, listening to what people say, sometimes asking them clarifying questions" (Gillham, 2000:45). The primary aim of observation is to learn or get more information about what or who is being watched. There are two types of observation: "participation: being involved – mainly descriptive, i.e. qualitative [and]

detached /structured [non-participant]: watching from ‘outside’ in a carefully timed and specified way – counting and classifying what you see, i.e. quantitative” (*ibid*, 2000: 46).

This means that participant and non-participant observation are for qualitative and quantitative research methodologies respectively.

As this is a piece of Action Research, a qualitative methodology that puts the researcher at the centre of the investigation, I was a participant observer throughout. I actively observed and participated in the action at the same time. For example, I took an active participant role at the palaces of Tìmì of Èdẹ and Arágbìjì of Ìrágbìjì in Nigeria in 2006 and I played the *dùndún* with the Royal Ensembles. The pictures taken are included at the end of this chapter. At some points, I participated moderately in order to make notes and discern the ongoing behaviour of the group.

The other method I employed was recording the session on tape. This allowed me to listen to the discussion once again and refresh my memory of the situation. This gave me another opportunity to evaluate the material and refer once again to the research concepts (as outlined in Chapter One) and make detailed notes on the thoughts of the participants and their experiences during the group discussion. In this way, the initial participant observation becomes a non-participant observation when a researcher listens to and reflects on the pre-recorded material.

3.6. Reflective Cycle

The reflective cycle in any piece of Action Research closely follows the series of actions that take place in the fieldwork. It is a period when the researcher retrospectively studies the data collected during the investigations and the events that make up the case studies. The

researchers analyse and theorise the data, and raise questions as to why certain things happen in certain ways during the investigation. The moment of reflection in the cycle is also a period when the researchers, through their own lens, pass judgement on the human situation. In this investigation, the reflective cycle considered such judgement and suggestions that were made during the case studies in an attempt to improve the practice and effect a positive change in the technique I was using. When a researcher returns to the field in order to apply those theories he has learnt during the reflective cycle, he becomes a reflective practitioner.

Schön (1983) is believed to have introduced reflective practice as a term in his book *The Reflective Practitioner*. Reflective practice is “a way of looking at something which was once constructed and may be reconstructed; and there is both readiness to explore meaning” (Schön, 1983: 296). It involves thoughtfully considering one’s own experiences about a situation and then debating on various theories in order to make sense of the action and the situation. Reflective practice is supposed to be a good thing, as long as it is not to the exclusion of action. Action Research requires that the practitioner suggests a solution that can lead to positive change in the situation. This means that finding an effective solution is a conscious principle of reflective practice.

In education, reflective practice is in the form of self-evaluation. It refers to the process of the teachers studying their own teaching methods in order to determine what works better for the students and also to uncover new ideas that can be applied in order to improve their work. This solution may be temporary as the situation is likely to change and the practitioner will always have to respond to the situation. This means that reflective practice can be a continuous process leading to the planning of another action, which will also be reflected on at some points in the future, i.e. re-planning, re-action and re-reflection (see fig. 6.). Thus, re-

action is “the practical implications of critical thought, the continuous interplay between doing something and revising our thought about what ought to be done” (Noffke, 1995:1).

Schön (1983) also suggests reflection-in-action, which can either mean the period in which someone reflects on a particular action or when someone reflects in the midst of the action. Schön favours the latter: “when we go about the spontaneous, intuitive performance of the actions” (Schön, 1983:49). In other words, it is ‘think on your feet’ theory. The belief is that the practitioner will be able to make a quick decision and act before things get out of hand. Although, this might be possible by way of defusing a situation temporarily, a lasting solution will probably demand thorough reflection.

The other form is reflection-on-action, which requires a practitioner to reflect on past action. In this investigation, the process of reflection followed both forms – reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. While the former took place during the workshops in the prison and performances with some practitioners in Nigeria, the latter took place after I had listened to the pre-recorded interviews and gone through my personal or reflective journal. The reflective journal is not only for keeping the records which describe what happened during the case studies as accurately as possible, but also collecting and analysing the researchers’ own judgements, reactions and impression about what happened in the field.

3.7. Ethical consideration

An Action Research methodology requires that the researcher works with people from all areas of life. In this investigation, I worked with the prison inhabitants, people in two different churches in Hampshire, some practitioners and academics in Nigeria and Ohio, USA. This work relationship required that I ask some intrusive questions for the purpose of

data gathering. This was used as a basis for decisions that I made throughout this investigation. In order not to be considered intrusive, the following ethical statements were considered for this research.

3.7.1. Permission and Consent

Permission to hold workshops and interviews with the subjects was obtained through letters, which accompanied the information pack. In some cases, this was done through the authority of such institutions (e.g. prison) before the permission was granted. Similarly, the researcher provided interview consent forms for those subjects at the workshops who had volunteered to be interviewed.

The interviewees voluntarily agreed to be interviewed and signed the interview consent forms, a copy of which is in Appendix 1. However, some interviewees were selected. These were the academics at my former university in Nigeria and those whom I met at the conference at Ohio University, Athens in the United States of America where I presented a paper. These were the people with considerable expertise either in ethnomusicology or musicology with or without the *dùndún* as their specialisation. I had contacted them through emails before meeting them for the interviews.

A similar method was employed for the interview of some Yorùbá *dùndún* practitioners in Nigeria. They were selected and contacted verbally. This is because none of them had access to the Internet. They were informed of the purpose of the interview and the information pack was translated to them before their signing of the interview consent forms. Furthermore, the researcher took pictures of some of the subjects who took part in the workshops, particularly where permission to do so had been granted. At the end of every case study, I always found

time to debrief the participants. I was aware that ethical considerations needed to be ongoing; I therefore reassessed these issues at all stages of the research and, where necessary, renegotiated consent with the participants.

3.7.2. The subjects' rights

All participants in this research were told of their right to withdraw, irrespective of whether or not they had signed the consent forms. This information was written in the information pack as well as communicated to them verbally before I took any action. This was intended to reassure participants that they might refuse to be interviewed and/or have their pictures taken, even if they had not responded positively to participate in the research.

The issue of confidentiality was also considered in this research. Although some of the participants agreed to the use of their names, the researcher has not used anyone's name. The data collected was stored on computer, tapes and paper, but these were destroyed or deleted as soon as the research was completed.

3.8. Conclusion

We have seen in this chapter how my chosen methodology, Action Research has involved a large number of strategies. The essence of Action Research is to investigate the changing practice of the researcher. Therefore, to do action research is to plan, act, observe and reflect more carefully, and more rigorously than one usually does in everyday life. I believe that changes are necessary for survival, but to effect a change, there is need for one to experience the situation first hand. Hence, I was not a detached observer but an engaged participant in the drumming workshops in the prison context. I also evaluated the results of the workshops through discussion and reflection.

The aim of Action Research is to refine personal practice and this involves personal judgements. The development of self-understanding is important, as it is another form of qualitative research, because of the extent to which the analysis of data and the interpretive process of developing meanings involves the self as a research instrument. Personal values and assumptions shape the research findings.

If research is about creating new knowledge and making new discoveries, then one cannot afford not to be an open-minded researcher. The direction of research cannot always be predicted. Hence, I kept an open-mind in this investigation and allowed the initial assumption to unfold in order to realise my values and stance. The research is essentially an account of my personal journey as a *dùndún* drummer. The next chapter focuses on my attempt to recontextualise the *dùndún* in two churches in Hampshire. The *dùndún* has been recontextualised extensively in many churches in Nigeria. This had given me the courage to attempt the same in Hampshire. We will see how the negative meanings given to the drum by the colonial missionaries may have coloured the way I was received in the two churches in Hampshire.



Fig. 16. The author with the Royal Ensemble of the Tìmì of Èdè in Nigeria



Fig. 17. The author performing with the Royal Ensemble in Èdè in Nigeria



Fig. 18. The author with the Royal Ensemble of the Arágbijí of Írágbijí



Fig. 19. An itinerant *dùndún* ensemble in Ilé-Ifè, Nigeria

Chapter Four

The *Dùndún* in the Church Context in Hampshire

4.1. Introduction

This is the first of the two case studies planned for this thesis. As part of the planning process, I identified two churches in Hampshire where I might be able to extend my practice as a *dùndún* practitioner. These two churches will be called ‘The Church of Hampshire’ (TCH) and ‘Cosmopolitan Church of Hampshire’ (CCH). The names of the churches and people in this chapter are anonymized. Following an Action Research methodology, all the strands in the spiral model in Chapter Two will be employed in this case study.

- Planning – Re-planning
- Acting – Re-acting
- Observing – Re-observing
- Reflecting – Re-reflecting

The first attempt to practise the *dùndún* drumming in the missionary churches by the Yorùbá converts and practitioners was rejected by the missionaries, who saw the Yorùbá musical culture through a colonial lens and concluded that it was incompatible with their Christian values. The Yorùbá priests and *dùndún* practitioners broke away from the missionary churches as a result of marginalisation and cultural prejudice. This paved the way for the *dùndún* to be recontextualised in many indigenous churches and later in European ones that were presided over by the Yorùbá priests.

Inspired by this, I have played the *dùndún* in churches in Nigeria and Hungary. I have included my previous experiences of this practice in this chapter, to show how they coloured

my perception of what happened in Hampshire. It was this experience that encouraged me to attempt to introduce my practice into TCH and CCH and see what paradigms might emerge. However, through observation, it became apparent that the view of the people in authority in TCH and CCH about the *dùndún* and notions of identity followed that of the colonial missionaries. Why did the TCH and CCH refuse the *dùndún* in their churches?

This chapter will reflect on the view of the colonial missionaries about the *dùndún* and how this affected my practice and identity in TCH and CCH. All the five concepts will run through this chapter, but ‘representation and presentation of culture and notions of identity’ will be the central concept. I shall make sense of my experience in TCH and CCH through the lens of post-colonial theory and the effect of this both on my preconceptions – based on my already established identity as a *dùndún* practitioner - and the actuality of what happened. Below is the general overview of this theory, why I have chosen it and how it will be used in the chapter.

4.2. Post-colonial theory

Post-colonial theory includes a vast array of scholars and subjects, and there are several theories as to what constitutes the term. Post-colonial theory has been employed in many disciplines including history, philosophy, literature, political science, sociology, theatre and approaches to culture and identity of both the countries of the colonised and colonisers. Nonetheless, there is no single acceptable definition of the theory. This is because the term is broad, and its parameters cannot be pinned down to a particular area. Furthermore, the very different geographical, cultural, historical, social, religious, political and economic concerns of the different former colonies reflect a wide variety of definition in most post-colonial writing. Bahri (1995) notes that this diversity of definitions exists because the term is used

both as a literal description of formerly colonial societies and as a description of global conditions after a period of colonialism.

The word post-colonial is a compound word, and the word 'post' is a prefix that governs the subsequent word, 'colonial'. The word 'post' refers to 'after'. Thus, post-colonial "becomes something which is 'post' or after colonial" (Mishra and Hodge, 1994:276). Succinctly, post-colonial is the period coming after the end of colonialism. However, some critics have argued that any literature that expresses an opposition to colonialism, even if it is written during a colonial period, may be defined as post-colonial. Slemon (1991), who takes a specific position in the use of this theory, also broadens the term to cover the pre-colonial period:

Definitions of the 'post-colonial' of course vary widely, but for me the concept proves most useful not when it is used synonymously with a post-independence historical period in once-colonised nations, but rather when it locates a specifically anti- or post-colonial discursive purchase in culture, one which begins in the moment that colonial power inscribes itself onto the body and space of its Others and which continues as an often occulted tradition into the modern theatre of neo-colonist international relation (Slemon, 1991:3).

We can see that the period that post-colonial theory covers is very vast, which makes the term very problematic. Ashcroft and his fellow scholars also recognise the complexity of defining a distinct period for post-colonialism, but also acknowledge the importance of adopting a position like Slemon's:

We use the term ‘post-colonial’, however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1989:2).

Ashcroft and his colleagues also believe that post-colonial theory as a theory should cover the period from the first day the colonisers invaded other people’s territories, forcing their values on the natives. The contradictions that emerged as a result of different belief systems and the wide scale of problems that resulted from it are some of the concepts in post-colonial theory. Thus, post-colonial theory is a weapon of critique of the former colonisers. It is characterised by its opposition to the colonial projects in the past, present and future.

However, when the colonised finally gained their independence, the traces of colonialism are still deeply ingrained, not just in the minds of the colonised, but also within their identities. Hence, post-colonial theorists argue for “the need, in nations, or groups which have been victims of imperialism to achieve an identity uncontaminated by universalist or Eurocentric concepts or images” (During, 1987: 32). As a victim of colonialism and Eurocentric concepts of identity, the ultimate goal of post-colonial theory in this investigation is to combat the residual effects of colonialism on my cultures and identities and *re-establish* an image of ‘self’.

The scale and scope of modern Eurocentricism, which includes racial domination, has made me believe that colonialism is still a contemporary phenomenon. In reality, modern

colonialism is not separated from the earlier colonialism; it now manifests as neo-colonialism. An understanding of the structure of some institutions (such as the two churches in this case study) illuminates the way in which the practice of the earlier colonialism still influences relationships between different ethnicities. The complexity in this context is concerned with my own preconceptions about the possibility of a post-colonial identity both on my part and on the part of the former imperial power. These encountered a neo-colonial stance on the part of TCH and CCH who wanted to maintain their existing structures.

Literature was one major means through which the colonial ideologies about African cultures were promulgated. The writings of the colonisers about Africa and their cultural practices had already shaped many people's perception about African cultures. Their representations of African cultures in the literary work were characterised by their opposition to African cultural values.

In literature, post-colonial theory reacts to the discourse of colonialism and often involves writings that deal with issues of de-colonisation or the political and cultural independence of people formerly colonised. One of the things that post-colonial literature does is that it works through the process of re-writing and re-reading literature that is hugely influenced by colonialism to reflect the culture and identity of the colonised. Gikandi says; "the most powerful moments of postcolonial theory are the one in which it tries to rewrite and reread the experience and discourse of modernity..." (Gikandi, 2000:87).

The focal point of this theory in this chapter is not to give the chronological history of post-colonial theory or examine various debates on it. Rather, it is to write from the perspective of someone who still experienced the effect of the legacy of colonialism in two churches in

Hampshire. One of the things that post-colonial theory does is that it gives previously colonised people their voice back and the opportunity to rewrite their experience from their own perspective. As a result of this, I am not writing from the perspective of the coloniser, but of the colonised who was marginalised and subjugated in TCH and CCH in Hampshire.

Post-colonial theory is used in this chapter as an academic discourse that consists of reactions to and analysis of the lingering legacy of colonialism on my culture. As post-colonial theory “foregrounds a politics of opposition and struggle, and problematizes the key relationship between centre and periphery” (Mishra and Hodge, 1994:276), the theory is employed as a critique of action and attitude of the church towards the *dùndún* that forms part of my identity. The theory is used to review and deconstruct one-sided, worn-out attitudes of the church in a lively discussion of neo-colonialism.

Post-colonial theory thus “can be read as a project of decolonisation that is informed by analyses of the relationships between discourses and social orders and thus acts as an anti-colonial force” (Goss, 1996:249). It is right to suggest that the two churches saw the *dùndún* as a decolonisational idea. As a concept in post-colonial theory, decolonisation is a process of change, destruction and, in the first place, an attempt by the colonised to regain power, which ultimately means that the colonisers lose power. However, the dominant people in the church were not ready to lose power to a once colonised culture.

I came from a once-colonised country where a post-colonial environment produced interesting possibilities for fusion and the negotiation of new identities. I moved to Hungary, a European country with an imperial history that did not include Nigeria where again there proved to be opportunities for new performing identities. I was thirsty for the possibilities of

negotiating more exciting identities in the culture of the former colonial power in Hampshire. My assumptions were that in a post-colonial age they would welcome new possibilities. This chapter will describe how such expectations were unfulfilled. The first part of this chapter is the reflection on my experience of church music in Nigeria and Hungary. This shows how the preconceptions that I brought to these situations were shaped and formed.

4.3. My experience of church music

I had experienced church music in two continents and three countries, Africa – Nigeria and Europe – Hungary and England. This experience varies as it is underpinned by differences in cultural values in these places. My church music experience in Nigeria was rich and also complex as a result of cultural values established by the colonisers, with their ultimate goal of making the colonised lose their identity and self reference. To achieve this, the colonisers promulgated and established their values through missionary schools and churches, both of which I attended. Hence, I was born into the values of the colonisers, and brought up in the Church of England (Anglican) tradition²² in Nigeria.

4.3.1. My experience of church music in Nigeria

My experience of church music will be drawn from two types of churches, the Anglican Church denomination and the indigenous Yorùbá churches – that is those that were founded by the Yorùbá priests and priestesses. Though I grew up in the Anglican tradition, as a nomadic Christian, worshipping in various Christian traditions, I also attended a number of the churches founded by the Yorùbá priests in Nigeria, where I played the talking drum. My music experience in these Yorùbá churches was richer than my experience in the Anglican

²² This was later changed to Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion to reflect the identity of the Nigerians.

Church. I will reflect briefly on the event that led to the creation of these churches to set the context for the rest of the chapter.

It is recorded that “Christianity came into Nigeria in the 15th Century through the efforts of Augustinian and Capuchin monks from Portugal. However, it was Henry Townsend of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) who sowed the seed of Anglicanism properly when he landed in Badagry, Lagos from Freetown in Sierra Leone in 1842”²³. Awolalu (1996) also affirms that Christianity came into Yorùbáland in 1842 by way of Badagry, but claims that “the leader of this missionary was Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman; the energetic Superintendent of Methodist Mission at Cape Coast” (Awolalu, 1996: 186).

The attitude of the missionaries soon after their arrival showed that their goal was not only to introduce Christianity to the Nigerians, but also to colonise and impose their values on them. Christianity is “based upon European languages and cultures” (Bowie, 2006:19). It is an extension of the Europeans’ way of life. What this means is that Christianity was a preplanned project of colonialism. Christianity was not just an attempt to impose the European cultural values; it was also part of the strategy employed by the missionaries to exploit African resources for their own advantage. This is best captured in the following statement; “when the white man first came here, we had the land and he had the Bible [and] then he asked us to close our eyes to pray and when we opened our eyes, we had the Bible and he had the land” (wa Thiong’o, 1972:33). This clearly shows that economic motives, as in the slave enterprise were also at the heart of the introduction of Christianity to Africa. Thus, Christianity was a colonial tool and the missionaries were also colonisers.

²³ The Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion, *History*, [Online] Available: <http://www.anglican-nig.org/history.htm> Accessed. 10.8.08

However, for the colonisers to establish their values, they needed to disrupt the cultural values of the colonised. The Yorùbá musical culture was the first target of the missionaries. Generally, in the Yorùbá culture and many others across the globe, music is a natural phenomenon. The Yorùbá express their everyday feelings through music just as in speech. Music is an integral and fundamental part of daily activities and professions. It is not an appendage to other things and it is not an abstract discipline or profession studied outside other activities of the immediate environment. It can be done alongside other occupations such as hunting, farming, tailoring, fishing, etc; which makes Yorùbá music “part of the organic whole” (Floyd, 1999:2). It permeates every level of traditional life, be it social, ceremonial or religious. It can be “integrated not only to the arts but [also] with life” (Okafor, 1991: 60).

The Yorùbá festivals accommodate various art forms and music in particular plays a significant role in the realisation of the events. The festivals are religious and theatrical, ritual and entertainment, and it is difficult, almost impossible, to separate the two. Hence, for the Yorùbá, culture and religion are closely intertwined and interdependent. The Yorùbá do not consider taking part in indigenous festivals and events as a taboo or incompatible with the belief in a single God. This belief is encapsulated in a Yorùbá adage, *ẹ̀sìn kan kòpé káwa má sorò ilée wa*, a religion cannot stop us from practising our culture. This is also the belief of many ethnic groups in Africa. Therefore, to the chagrin of the missionaries, regular attendance at church by the Yorùbá Christians coexisted with attendance at festivals. The missionaries found the practices “repugnant and therefore condemned them strongly” (Kurgat, 2009:92).

The drum is the most powerful musical instrument in Africa. Drums feature heavily in festive activities and there is a strong tradition of drum use in the spiritual rituals in Africa. The beat of a drum attracts attention and invites some type of physical response, which the missionary thought to be the work of the devil. The overwhelming use of the drums and their particular role in the festivals led to prejudice against them and the practitioners whose identities were constructed around the drumming tradition. The practitioners who wanted to take their practice to missionary churches were asked to destroy an important part of their identity:

In the past, the tearing of the skin of the drum was a symbol of conversion to Christianity. This was based on the belief that the drum was a medium of communication between the traditional healer and the ancestors. The sound of the drum is believed to arouse the ancestral spirits. It is believed that through the sound of the drum together with the accompanying rhythmic dancing and the clapping of hands, the traditional healer can bring about the presence of the ancestral spirits (Buti Tlhagale²⁴).

The missionaries believed that African drums were evil and therefore should not be used in their churches because these would resurrect memories of the ancestral worship amongst the African believers. The practitioners were asked to destroy and tear them before coming to the missionary churches. Those who objected to this were denied the opportunity to worship in the missionary churches. In the 1960s, Duro Ladipo, a renowned playwright and dramatist was expelled from the church for playing the *bàtá* drums. He confirms this; “in the church at

²⁴ ‘Bringing the African Culture into The Church’ [Online] Available: <http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/tlhagale.htm> Accessed. 10.8.10

Oshogbo I introduced *Bata* drums into a Christmas Cantata and it was an offence to bring the pagan drum into the Christian Church” (quoted in Adedeji, 1998:87).

However, “because they knew their actions were wrong, [the missionaries] sought ways to justify their acts, not only to others but also to themselves” (Okagbue, 2009:2). It is a common practice of the colonisers to create a counter discourse about the cultures and practices of the colonised in order to empower themselves and justify their actions. Some indigenous Africans who understood the colonial motives and stood up to their oppression were also portrayed as evil and enemies of their people. This was the strategy that the colonisers employed and Oba Ovonramwen of Benin Kingdom in Nigeria and Dedan Kimathi, an army general in Kenya, were both victims of the colonial oppression.

Based on the true stories, some postcolonial theorists have reconstructed the reports of the colonisers in the following creative works; Rotimi (1974) *Ovonramwen Nogbaisi*; Yerima (1997) *The Trials of Oba Ovonramwen* and wa Thiong’o and Mugo (1976) *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*. Okagbue (2009) has also done a comprehensive study of the two creative works within the postcolonial context in his book, *Culture and Identity in African and Caribbean Theatre*. I will briefly recall the story of Oba Ovonramwen of Benin Kingdom.

Oba Ovonramwen’s father was an Adolo and he was named Idugbowa but “was crowned Oba with the title of Ovonramwen in 1888. He was tall, stout, and of a yellow complexion and had a majestic voice” (Egharevba, 1968:48). The British Government saw the need to conquer Benin as central to a successful business adventure in the Niger-Delta sub-region of the Niger and “Oba Ovonramwen as his cognomen “Nogbaisi” (meaning the Enlightened

implied was fully conversant with the truth of international politics of his era” (Ofonagoro in Yerima, 1997:9-10).

Oba Ovonramwen had the knowledge of his environment. However, the growing power of the British Government who had already captured and subdued great peoples and kingdoms such as Warri, Lagos and the Itsekiri, made Oba Ovonramwen sign a treaty with this new imperial power on the 26th day of March 1892. The colonisers had their own self interest at heart and saw their Empire as a way of boosting the British economy. The treaty contained nine articles. Articles five and six contained the summaries of the motives of the colonial British Government towards the Benin Kingdom:

The king of Benin hereby engages to assist the British consular or other officials in the execution of such duties as may be assigned to them; and, further, to act upon their advice in matters relating to the administration of justice, the development of the resources of the country, the interest of commerce, or in any other matter in relation to peace, order and good government and the general progress of civilization... The subjects and citizens of all countries may freely carry on trade in every part of the territories of the king, partly hereto, and may have houses and factories therein (Eghareva, 1968: 87).

Igue is one of the festivals in Benin Kingdom, and the tradition and custom of the Benin people forbid strangers to see the king during the festival. However, the then Acting Consul-General, James R. Phillips, and his men, who were eager to enforce the treaty insisted that

they must see the king. This then led to “the massacre of Phillips party which took place on the 17th February 1897” (Musa, 2006: 158).

The Benin Kingdom was chaotic, as there was a political struggle between Oba Ovonramwen and his brother. The result of this was that the internal rebels were killed by Oba Ovonramwen. Based on this, Oba Ovonramwen was “represented as a blood-thirsty tyrant who feasted on the flesh of his enemies and sometimes on that of his loyal subjects” (Okagbue, 2009:17). This became justification for the action of the colonisers that followed. A once powerful king and kingdom fell to the hands of the colonisers and the history of the Benin Kingdom was rewritten through their lens. Oba Ovonramwen was tried in the colonial court and sent to exile in Calabar where he later died.

The trial of Oba Ovonramwen was firstly an act of revenge for the massacre of the Phillips party. Secondly and more significantly, the desire to exploit the wealth of the Benin Kingdom, to improve the lives of their people back home in Britain, was an important factor in Oba Ovonramwen’s trial. It was part of their planned project to get rid of anyone who stood in their way. This was also the case of Dedan Kimathi, an army general in Kenya who stood up to the colonisers. Shaw Henderson clearly told him this: “nations live by strength and self-interest. You challenged our interests: we had to defend them” (*The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, 34). This clearly shows that the colonisers always used moral precepts to underpin their use of power. This enabled them to see themselves as in the right and the oppressed as in the wrong.

One of the great concerns of the colonisers was the frequency of the *dùndún* in all community festivals. The very nature of the art of the *dùndún* drumming tradition makes it the favourite

and the interaction between the dancers and drummers also makes it an ideal medium for dance-drama. The role play between the drummers and dancers was misunderstood by the colonial missionaries and this opened the tradition to negative meanings and connotations.

The colonial missionaries stigmatised the *dùndún* and its concept of ‘talking drum’; “calling it pagan, evil, and unworthy for holy use” (Yankson, 2007:3). The *dùndún* was represented as a device meant for communicating with the spiritual world and which could make people go into a hypnotic trance and afflict them. This assumption placed the practitioners in direct conflict with the colonial missionaries because they constructed their identity around the drum. The missionaries did not only see the *dùndún* drumming tradition as evidence of paganism, they also saw the practitioners as pagans. These unfounded representations are what Okagbue (2009) refers to as ‘myths of colonialism’, assumptions that underpin a certain ideology and legalise it.

There were some important things that lay behind the missionaries’ rejection of the *dùndún* in their churches. As I have mentioned in Chapter Three, the *dùndún* represents the Yorùbá culture, values, identity and power. Christianity, on the other hand, represents the missionaries’ culture, values, identity and power. In terms of culture, the indigenous African cultures were seen by the colonial missionaries as uncivilised and primitive. One of the means to civilise them was to introduce their own cultures to them. Therefore, bringing the *dùndún* to the missionary churches was seen as an attempt by the Yorùbá to introduce their culture to the missionaries and eventually integrate it into their liturgical tradition. However, as the Yorùbá culture was already termed uncivilised, this was seen as detrimental to the ‘civilised’ culture of the colonising missionaries. Moreover, the goal of the colonial missionaries was to impose their cultures on others and not to take on other people’s culture.

The colonial values were embedded in Christianity and one of these was the notion of God, which the colonial missionaries believed was not in the culture of the Yorùbá. However, there were established concepts of the divine in Yorùbá cultures; their overwhelming desire to impose European values and practices prevented them from engaging with these indigenous ideas. They did not want to accept the fact that there was the possibility of an indigenous cultural mix where Christianity could be reconceptualised outside the developed liturgical tradition of Europe.

Another manifestation of the European value systems of the missionaries was expressed in the musical instruments that they favoured. The developed liturgical musical tradition of Christianity was that of the European colonial missionaries and not of the Yorùbá. Therefore, the *dùndún* represented a drumming tradition of no value. Both Christianity and their musical tradition were part of the identity of the colonisers, which they did not want to compromise. It was not part of the project of the colonisers to move towards cultural pluralism:

Colonialism did not create space for African culture. The dominant group did not recognise that African culture had its own wisdom, insights and values that informed the lives of Africans. African culture appeared to have had an arrested growth. At any rate the aspiration of the dominant group was to civilize the Africans or to assimilate them into their culture (Buti Tlhagale)²⁵.

²⁵ 'Bringing the African Culture into The Church' [Online] Available: <http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/tlhagale.htm> Accessed. 10.8.10

We can see that the primary goal of the coloniser was to replace the cultures and values of the colonised with theirs. The ultimate project of colonialism was based on ethnocentrism; their attitude was that they were modern and the Africans were not. Therefore the colonisers saw themselves as having a responsibility to use their own value systems as the basis for a programme of indoctrination. This makes Kim (2002) assert that: “traditional Western theology, with its emphasis on individual salvation and morality, was often disruptive of non-Western cultures” (Kim, 2002:12).

It was not that the colonisers did not see morality in the cultures and values of the colonised. They believed that the morality in their own values (such as their instruments) was the only one compatible with Christianity. As a result of the preconceptions, they did not make any attempt to engage with the culture of the colonised. They paid no attention to some vitally important and fundamental aspects of the pre-existing life of the colonised. They made no attempt to integrate the cultures of the colonised with their cultures because this would have brought the ‘centre and periphery’ together (Mishra and Hodge, 1994).

In terms of power, the *dùndún* is a very powerful musical instrument as I have said in Chapter Two. It is also very symbolic as a talking drum. It symbolises the voices of the Yorùbá people, and particularly those of the practitioners. Therefore, when the colonial missionaries refused to allow the *dùndún* to be played in their churches, not only did they take away their power; they also silenced and confined them to more passive roles in their land. They did not want the voices of the Yorùbá people or the practitioners to be heard. They probably understood the role of the *dùndún* as an eloquent instrument. If they had allowed the *dùndún* in their churches, the Yorùbá people would probably have had power, because their empowerment would have been through their own musical culture.

Power was a big issue for the colonial missionaries. They did not want the Yorùbá converts to have power in their churches. This was reflected in the manner in which the Yorùbá priests were treated. They were not vested with power. The affairs of the church were in the hands of the colonial priests. The Yorùbá priests were held in the colonisers' opinion as lacking leadership qualities. Rather than performing their liturgical duties as priests, they were marginalised:

the persistent ill-treatment of the Nigerian clergy in the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS), the exclusion of competent Nigerians from high ecclesiastical positions, and the contemptuous manner in which Nigerian customs were perceived by the European clergy gradually brought the educated converts into conflict with the missionaries (Sadiku, 2004:126).

Firstly, the colonial missionaries banned the *dùndún*, thus taking away the voices and power of the Yorùbá and the practitioners. Secondly, the Yorùbá priests were not given power to officiate in their churches. We can see that what the colonisers wanted was to indoctrinate the colonised into their cultural values. This ill-treatment coupled with cultural marginalisation later led to mass exodus of the Yorùbá priests and converts from the colonial churches. This then led to the creation of indigenous churches such as Celestial Church of Christ, The Apostolic Church, The Church of the Lord Aladura, Cherubim and Seraphim, etc. and thus 'Yorùbánisation'²⁶ of the liturgy.

²⁶ What I mean by this term is that the structure of the liturgy and its realisation was and is still heavily influenced by Yorùbá culture and tradition.

The Yorùbá converts interpreted Christianity within the paradigms of their cultural practices to include their identity and values. One of the vital steps towards this was “the introduction of drums to service” (Sadiku, 2004:127), which the colonisers once condemned as pagan instruments. This strategy disempowered the colonisers, and restored power back to the colonised. This style of liturgy drew many people back to the ‘Yorùbánised’ churches, including the *dùndún* practitioners who had been excluded by the colonisers.

They re-established themselves and “members of the church, including African priests, advocated the indigenisation of theatrical entertainment by drawing on indigenous cultural and artistic resources, such as dance and drumming” (Euba, 2000:209). The congregation formed different societies in the church which paralleled their normal life. Thus, some were only women, some only for men and some a mixture of both:

During the harvest festival, for example, the various church societies were called one by one to the altar to make offerings. The procession to and from the altar by members of the society was usually accompanied by singing, drumming and dancing (Euba quoted in Monson, 2000:213).

This usually provided great opportunities for theatrical and musical display with enthusiasm, just like in the community festivals. These Yorùbá led churches empowered the Yorùbá people by drawing on their already established traditions and culture.

The influence of the ‘Yorùbáised’ churches extended to the churches founded by the Europeans, but presided over by Yorùbá priests. Though the Anglican denomination was emblematic of the colonial culture and values, the execution of the liturgy changed when Yorùbá priests took over liturgical control from the white missionaries. Our family church was a good example of this. There were many societies within the church. We had many Yorùbá instruments such as the *dùndún*, *gangan*, *sèkèrè* and *agogo*. Music was always overwhelmingly used and dancing, drumming and singing were always very elaborate. As a strand in the spiral model, I will reflect on my past experience below.

As a musician, every church where music is used is potentially a place of worship for me. My regular attendance in the church was not just because I was brought up in a Christian faith, but also because of the love that I had and still have for music. Therefore, joining the choir was an opportunity to play the *dùndún* drum, which had become part of my identity. The experience that the church was able to provide me paralleled the one I was having at community events and festivals. For me, the church was just another space for alternative or popular theatre.

The ‘Yorùbáised’ churches were the best places to draw a parallel between religion and theatre. As a nomadic and egalitarian Christian, I worshipped in many of them in Nigeria. Whilst many ‘Yorùbáised’ churches exhibit certain features of Yorùbá culture and religion, “Aladura Christianity among the Yorùbá of Nigeria bears the full imprint of Yorùbá traditional religion” (Ray, 1993:266)²⁷. With extensive use of musical instruments,

²⁷ The Aladura are a type of Yorùbáised churches that exhibit many features of Yorùbá culture and religion. The Aladura have a distinct feature, their members wear white long dresses and they believe in the power of prayer and spiritual healing and miracles through the manifestation of spirit, which often comes in form of a trance just like in indigenous Yorùbá religious practice.

spontaneous display of dance, miming and the manner in which they use Biblical texts, the structure of their doctrines reflect the Yorùbá ritual theatre.

However, this hybridity of Yorùbá culture and Christianity drew much criticism from many Christians whose minds were already colonised. They perceived some of the ‘Yorùbánised’ churches as “imperfect versions of western Christianity or a mere adaptation of the traditional religion” (Ray, 1993:267). This criticism for me is not particularly useful. I am not interested in identifying the origins of certain elements of Yorùbá religious practices found in ‘Yorùbánised’ churches. What the critics failed to realise is that Christianity and its realisation were grounded in colonial cultures and values without taking into account the cultural values of the colonised. The Yorùbá took a holistic approach to Christianity by re-grounding it within the broader context of their culture, religion, custom and tradition. This made the ‘Yorùbánised’ churches tools for religious and cultural independence.

Interestingly, the Yorùbá were not the only people who interpreted Christianity within their religious and cultural paradigms. The Chinese also re-grounded the European “missionary work to the Chinese practice of ancestor worship” (Liu and Leung, 2002:122) in the 17th century, and interpreted Christian teachings in the context of Confucianism. This was also criticised by the colonisers and some Chinese Christians whose minds were already colonised.

As we can see, my experience of church music in Nigeria was rich and the values underpinning it coloured my hopes for my workshops in Hampshire. Important in this experience was the notion of hybridity that I have described above – the mixing of the

musical instruments of the colonisers and the colonised. I shall now reflect on my experience of church music in Hungary.

4.3.2. My experience of church music in Hungary

As I discussed in Chapter One, I left Nigeria for the former Yugoslavia with my 'AfrOriginal Dance Troupe' in 1996 with the aim of deconstructing the Eurocentric perception of the culture of the colonised and to improve my practice. However, my time in Yugoslavia was very short. Therefore, I did not attend any church or experience any church music at all in Belgrade. When I reflected on this I felt that I had missed the experience of church music amongst the Serbians, which would have made my experience of church music in Europe even richer.

I moved together with my troupe to Hungary in October 1996 and I lived in Budapest for seven years before coming to England in 2003. As a nomadic Christian, I worshipped in many churches in Hungary. Therefore, it is only fair to give it more treatment than other music experience that I had elsewhere in Europe. Nonetheless, I shall limit my experience to just two churches, the International Church of Budapest and the New Church of Budapest.

4.3.2.1. The International Church of Budapest (ICB)

As part of my identity, the first thing I did in Hungary was to look for a church where English was the medium of service. There were a number of them in Budapest, such as St. Margaret's Anglican/Episcopal Church, the International Baptist Church, and the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints; the Danube International Church and the Presbyterian Church of

Scotland among others. However, I chose the International Church of Budapest (ICB)²⁸, a non-denominational and transnational church for two reasons. Firstly, it had a number of black people from Nigeria, Gambia, Ghana, Cameroon and Senegal. It was my belief that I would feel more at home in a church with many black people than in a church with predominantly white people. Secondly, I chose ICB because of the style of the services, which embraced singing and drumming during praise and worship sessions.

The International Church of Budapest was founded by the Americans, and it lent its help to many people including those who came from war-torn countries like Kosovo, Yugoslavia and Albania. The church did not only help with food and shelter, it also encouraged individual groups of people to organise cultural programmes so that they could integrate to their new home. We black people in the church benefitted from this and we were actually encouraged to organise a cultural programme.

In 1998, we negotiated for a particular Sunday to celebrate harvest in our own way. The programme of events included story-telling, music and bazaar. We also created a choir and had a number of rehearsals. We chose two Yorùbá songs and overwhelmingly played the *dùndún* drums. As one of the organisers, I helped the group to handle the music together with some members of my ‘AfrOriginal Dance Troupe’ who were also members of the church.

The event was called ‘African Day’. This and other terms such as ‘African choir’ and ‘African music’ were not just acquired for the purpose of this chapter; it was used before and during the event. These terms were not meant to suggest that our performance was a true representation of all cultures in Africa. The terms were created and used deliberately for the

²⁸ The full information about International Church of Budapest can be found on their website: <http://www.church.hu/>

purpose of distinguishing our programme from the usual church events. The terms later became part of our group identity for the event and performance. As the terms were created for the purpose of that event, the originality of the performance can be defined in the paradigm of the intricate parts of that identity.

The programme was tailored and embellished with multicultural artistic products, which made the event “dynamic, creative and real” (Linnekin, 1990:161). The uniqueness of the group lay in the performance; the originality of performance identity was privileged in the discourse of group identity; hence, the use of these terminologies.

What is group identity and how was it created for the event in Budapest? Why was it important to have a group identity? How did my identity play out within the identity of the group? These academic questions and the rationale behind the creation of a group identity, and its advantages in the event in Budapest will be discussed and reflected on in the following analysis using the five concepts of this thesis.

There is much literature on both the theory of collective and group identity, both of which scholars have used interchangeably (Davis, 1999; Machado and Ferreira, 2000). In this chapter I will be using group identity because of its relevance in this case. It is termed a ‘collective identity’ and defined as “the “we-ness” of a group, stressing the similarities or shared attributes around which group members coalesce (Cerulo, 1997:386-387). Cerulo further identifies ‘natural’ and ‘essential’ as two attributes of a collective identity. The attributes of our group identity were both natural and essential.

The first natural attribute of the group was that we were all Africans. It was on the paradigm of racial identity that the event was built. To borrow the idea of Favor (1999), it was our ‘blackness’, which united us; it was a symbolic identification of our heritage. This enabled us to present a performance that reflected our group identity – one that could not be regarded as a representation of a particular culture in Africa. There was no cultural competition amongst the various ethnic groups, because the emphasis was not on the ethnic identity of the individual, but on the ‘shared property’ (Boyce-Tillman, 2007). At the planning stage of the event, cultural dialogue was encouraged; all cultures were represented on the basis of equality and independence, and everybody was made to understand that no culture was inferior or superior.

By accepting this principle, we invented a transnational identity, united under a single identity as Africans. This became the essential value of the group and performance, and indeed a principal factor to the success of the event. For example, the identity of the music was not placed in the original culture of the songs or instruments. As the event was not meant to present or represent individual cultures, prominence was not given to the cultural traits of the songs; it was given to the group identity that was created for the purpose of the event.

In a European culture that prizes individualised identity, the notion of group identity can appear problematic. One strand in the argument is that all cultures are not usually recognised equally within a group. It has also been emphasised that “created identities are not somehow contrived and sincere” (Thomas, 1992:213). This argument is underpinned by the western or European culture, where individualism is the prevailing social philosophy. In the Yorùbá culture, ‘communitism’, a concept of shared consciousness is prized very highly. Floyd

(2008) has also identified this in Maasai culture. For this reason, I will say that this group identity was in fact sincere and authentic.

I do not dispute the importance of individual cultural and/or religious identity or the fact that certain cultures of the group members were at the forefront during the event. However, a particular culture was not traditionally, historically and socially valued above the other during the event. All these issues were of less significance; the intrinsic value of the event was the process of the formulation of a single group identity from a group with multiple identities.

What was important was not so much the categorical fact that we all had cultural differences, but rather our African heritage that shaped our understandings, and from which we could put together a temporary group identity. The way in which we constructed the programme was intended to give value to the variety of identities that we represented rather than establish an individualised ethnic identity. Once the scope of such valorisations had been recognised and agreed, we became less concerned with representing an individual ethnic identity. We placed the significance on our group identity and united under the banner of our shared identity. This was the legacy and reputation which we all collectively managed as a group.

The second shared attribute upon which we built our group identity was colonialism. When the colonisers went to Africa, their main focus was to make the people lose their sense of cultural identity and to divide the people. As Africans, we were all aware of the cultural objectifications of the colonial times and the legacy of colonialism still lingered in everybody's memories. Colonialism had had a more sustained and repressive impact on our lives and experience collectively. This collective repression paved the way for autonomy and the search for a collective shelter. What united us was the effect of colonialism in our lives.

Although Hungary did not colonise any country in Africa, we created a group identity to re-establish the culture of the colonised in a European country.

This common goal paved the way for a cultural unity amongst us. Despite our cultural differences, “the overwhelming nature of the colonial situations and ideologies of which we [were] all victims” (Yai, 1999:33) led to a unified identity. Hence, “we explored [our] perceptions of the past and significance of history for present identities” (Thomas, 1992:214). This compelled us to coalesce and work towards common goals of racial identity, which might not be possible if we had been in Africa.

The formation of a group identity in this way can help in the radical rejection of cultural hegemony in the community. This notion of identity was based on the unity of the colonised against the colonisers, the oppressed against the oppressors. It can be likened to the one that united the African descendants in the United States of America under the broad umbrella of an African-American identity, which later gave them a single voice and recognition.

Though our group identity at the ICB was not created because we were being oppressed, nonetheless, we couched our identity in terms made available by the dominant culture and celebrated and affirmed what colonial power had subordinated and denigrated (e.g. African drums in the missionary churches), making our performance a symbol of political, religious and cultural freedom.

Another shared property was Christianity, a religion introduced to us by the colonial missionaries. It would appear that there were many indigenous religious beliefs in the cultures of the members of the group. These religious differences could have caused a big

division amongst us. However, we forgot our indigenous religious identities and reworked the religious identity that the colonisers gave us and which we have also kept for individual reasons and used it for our own advantage. The colonisers would have thought that we would observe Christianity in the way they gave it to us, but instead we celebrated Christianity in a way that depicted our African heritage and reflected our values. However, while this angered the colonisers when the Yorùbá attempted to do the same in the past in the missionary churches, the ICB authority showed liberality towards cultural differences.

There was another important factor that authenticated our group identity, which is also linked to the colonialism of the past. It was apparent that the Cameroonians in the group were also in a dilemma over how to construct their identity. This was caused by the colonisers. Cameroon was colonised by two European countries, Britain and France. As a result of their individual self interest, both colonisers were not able to forgo their part of the country. They had no interest of the people in their hearts; they divided many households. The result of this is that Cameroon was split between two imperial cultures. Those in the English part of the country were forced to carry English identity and values, and those in the French part were forced to carry French identity and values in addition to their various ethnic cultural identities.

The Cameroonians carry both British and French identities, and thereby creating ‘transnational hybrid identities’ (Harris, 2006). This made the identity of the Cameroonians amongst us even more complicated. For example, whilst the Cameroonian who played the synthesiser was from the French speaking part of their country, the one on bass guitar was from the English speaking part. There was no communication between them as a result of their acculturation into two different cultural values. However, whilst colonialism divided them, our performance united them. The performance did not only give them a unified

identity, it also became the common language that they both spoke. Our performance achieved what the colonisers failed to achieve – that is fostering good communication between them.

We can see that there was a high level of integration in our group and performance – different nationalities, ethnic groups, cultures, musical cultures and instruments – western and African. The use of the western instruments clearly showed that we could not completely do without the colonial cultural values; and that was not our intention as Christianity itself is emblematic of these.

Within an event that was characterised as ‘African day’, the values of the colonisers still featured. Despite the repressive impact that colonialism had on our lives, the voices of the colonisers (in the context of the western musical instruments) were not silenced. Our intention was not to silence their voices, but to make the voices of the colonisers and the colonised to be heard at the same time. Moreover, integrating western musical instruments into church music can come very easily. The hybridity of both musical cultures here produced an enrichment of the music of the church. For me, this is an authentic church music but I could not convince the TCH and CCH in Hampshire with this argument.

When we consider the way that many African instrumentalists use the western instruments, we can rightly say that they have become African instruments. They reground the western instruments within the musical idioms of their cultures, therefore turning them to indigenous instruments.

The integration of western and African instruments was also an integration of cultural values of the colonisers and the colonised. Our performance bridged the gap between the centre and periphery. However, because the main focus of the event was the cultural values of the colonised, those of the colonisers were not at the forefront. Thus, the western musical instruments were used as supplements, backing African instruments such as the *dùndún* and *gáangan*. As the event was characterised by African cultures, this resulted in a shift of power.

The event gave me an opportunity to establish an important part of my identity. I was also able to regain my lost power as a *dùndún* practitioner. I played the drum and we were able to inspire everybody to dance to our ‘African music’. I was particularly thrilled when the non-Africans joined us in the dance and chorus we taught them. The event was celebratory and the church showed a high level of enthusiasm, which suggests to me that the church shared in our empowerment.

In summary, our performance represented an achievement of collective efforts. The musical experience that the event provided me was unique and different from other experiences that I had in Nigeria possibly because of many nationalities involved and the new location. The following sections are the reflection of the other music experience in another church in Budapest.

4.3.2.2. The New Church of Budapest (NCB)

I had another music experience in a church, which I will call the New Church of Budapest (NCB). My experience in this church was different from the one I had in the International Church of Budapest, (ICB). The reason for this is that the church was characterised by the culture of the colonised and not of the colonisers. Furthermore, as the church was founded by

a Yorùbá family which I was well acquainted with, this gave me the opportunity to establish and affirm my identity and practice as a *dùndún* practitioner.

The creation of NCB led to a mass exodus of many black people and their Hungarian partners from predominantly white churches in Budapest. This can be likened to when the Yorùbá left the colonial missionary churches to ‘Yorùbánised’ churches. Those who felt compelled to worship in the liturgical tradition of the colonial culture were the patrons in the NCB. They felt they would be more empowered in a church that was constructed from their cultural heritage. The church also brought out a number of Africans who had not attended church before. This made the church culturally diverse.

However, there was a problem in this high level of cultural integration. For example, we could easily count more than twenty nationalities in a single Sunday service, which meant over twenty ethnic languages. This was compounded by different colonial languages such as English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and German spoken by the congregation. With this level of integration, how did they define the identity of the church? The church was clearly in a dilemma over which language to adopt as a mode of communication. How did cultural differences play out in the realisation of the liturgy and which value system would prevail? What would be the effect of the chosen value system on my identity within the musical paradigm of the church?

The identity of the church was as complex as that of the congregation. Despite the fact that the church was characterised by the values of the colonised (in terms of music and style of liturgy), the value of the colonisers (in terms of language) prevailed. The cultural position of language is very significant. This is because “language encompasses culture” (Rival,

1997:140). It is an important element that defines someone's identity within the global culture. Hence, the use of colonial language as a means of expression in the literature of the colonised is fraught with social and political implications.

This is why language has been the focus of many postcolonial theorists such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Chinua Achebe. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, a forerunner in this debate, argues against the use of colonial language in the literature of the colonised. He sees the use of a colonial language as an act of perpetuating the colonial tongue, their identity and values. He was writing in the colonial language in the 1960s, but later changed to his native African language in the 1970s. There was a conflict within him: "the use of English as my literary medium of expression, particularly in theatre and novel, had always disturbed me" (wa Thiong 'o, 1986:43).

Firstly, Wa Thiong'o wants to attain a monolingual position in his writing without having to resort to any artificial conventions. Secondly, he wants to relieve himself from the burden of colonialism, to decolonise his mind and disengage from the colonial values. Achebe (1975) also thinks that it is not right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's. This looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling for Achebe. Nonetheless, he realises that there is no other choice than to use the language that he has been given by the colonisers.

My position in this debate, particularly in the context of the NCB, is similar to Achebe's in that I believe in the idea of disengaging from the colonial values. However, a situation can force someone to use the colonial tongue even without the intention of perpetuating the cultural values of the colonisers. In the NCB, using English, a colonial language was the only

option. The fact is that the colonial language was the only medium through which the church could communicate with a congregation that was culturally diverse. The colonisers might see this as victory, but this saved the NCB from disintegrating.

Moreover, colonial languages have become part of the identity of all the colonised.

Therefore, using the colonial languages, where necessary, for me is not an act of perpetuating colonial values. It is “the reproduction of ways of being in the world” (Rival, 1997:139).

Furthermore, when we looked at the manner in which English was being used during the church service, it did not reflect colonial values. We had squeezed the English language, though it was a colonial language, so that it could function within the paradigm of the culture of the colonised. This eventually gave the colonised power over the language of the colonisers.

Christianity, as it is being practised by the colonised, is not constructed completely around colonial values. If we further look at the NCB, we would see that there were other important cultural values of the colonised that overshadowed the colonial values. For example, we always sang many songs in African languages and used African musical instruments extensively. The colonial cultural values were kept on the periphery of the church service.

The structure of the church was another important aspect of the service that reflected the cultural values of the colonised; it was flexible. A sense of “we-ness” formed the basis upon which the church was structured. This consequently gave power to the *dùndún* as a leading instrument and me as a practitioner. As the church belonged to ‘us’, I would play as long as ‘we’ wanted and the service would run beyond the two hours schedule resulting in ‘African time’ (Hamminga, 2009).

What is African time? “The African time concept was (is) very elastic...in order to make sense or be real, time had to be experienced” (Nobles, 2000: 283) and not measured. In the African world, time is reckoned by phenomena, and the events or phenomena that constitute time are reckoned and considered in their relation with one another as they take place (Mbiti, 1969). The phenomenal changes in the environment and events constitute time. Hence, “for most Africans time was meaningful at the point of the event and not at the mathematical moment” (Nobles, 2000: 283). In the African world views time is to be felt, experienced and not measured. Thus, Africans measure time by the event and experience. In contrast, time in western culture is mechanical, structured, ordered and numerical, though it is not always experienced like that.

In our pan-African view, Christianity is not just a religion, but also a religious event and a religious event is meant to be celebrated and experienced. It is upon this paradigm that the New Church of Budapest was founded. The emphasis was not on the numerical time, but on the experience of the congregation and it would be disrespectful to stop playing because of time when the congregation was in high spirits. However, I observed that some white partners of Africans in the congregation found the practice of African time annoying because of the differences in the concept of time in African and Western cultures. While it was not our intention to subjugate the white minority in the church, yet our values always prevailed.

My experience of church music in Budapest was great. My musical experience in the NCB was richer than that of the ICB. Nonetheless, I had to leave for England at the peak of that good experience. However, I hoped that this experience would continue due to the population of the black and indeed Nigerians and the Yorùbá living in England. Below is the reflection of my experience of church music in Winchester.

4.4. My experience of church music in Hampshire

My experience as a *dùndún* practitioner in the context of Winchester Churches can be divided into two. The first one enabled me to negotiate the beginning of a post-colonial identity in the context of Anglican worship. In the second, I encountered neo-colonial attitudes which closed the door to any new possibilities.

4.4.1. The *dùndún* in Anglican contexts in Winchester

I first played a *dùndún* drum in a carol service at the University of Winchester chapel in 2005. As the university was established by the Church of England, the service reflected the Anglican tradition. The prevailing values of the university encouraged the celebration of cultural diversity. It is possible to see this strand in British culture – which runs through a great deal of British educational thinking - as a post-colonial phenomenon – a reaction to the legacy of colonialism.

The establishment of Foundation Music and the attempt (of which I was part) to make the traditional structure of the Anglican carol service include a greater degree of cultural diversity were all parts of establishing an identity for the university formed in a climate of post-colonialism. I set about the task, that I was invited to carry out, of establishing an identity for the *dùndún* within a university with an Anglican Foundation.

In December 2005, the African Drumming Ensemble (ADE) contributed to a carol service at the university on the invitation of the organiser. There were two reasons why the organiser invited ADE to contribute to the service. Firstly, as she is not a traditionalist she wanted the carol service to celebrate cultural diversity. However, to the traditionalists, the service should have reflected the colonial values only. Secondly, as someone who understood the Yorùbá

culture as being celebratory, she wanted the birth of Jesus to be celebrated using this African tradition. She specifically asked ADE to integrate the Yorùbá carol tradition into the service to make the event colourful and inclusive.

The two objectives of the organiser were met. As I have said in Chapter One, ADE membership was from different cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, there was also a high level of integration in terms of costumes and musical instruments. Whilst I played the European adaptation of the *dùndún* drum, others backed me up with *djembes* and hand-held percussion instruments. The ensemble invited a female Yorùbá colleague to join us and we both planned the event. We chose and sang an English carol in Yorùbá, but the tune of the song was the same as its English version. We created an interlude during the piece, which enabled me to play the talking drum whilst the female colleague danced. The second objective of the organiser was also met – our piece was celebratory. However, despite this, the congregation did not join ADE in singing. Rather, they sat quietly and watched us performing; they confined themselves to more passive roles. How did this play out in the minds of some people in the service? I will reflect on this below.

Our piece attracted some criticism amongst a few traditionalists. This was the complete opposite of what happened in Budapest, where we were showered with adulation. The problem was two opposing value systems reflected in different worship styles. The preferred system that the traditionalists valued was similar to that of the colonial missionaries. I think that the problem here was the way in which they defined a service. For them, there was a difference between a concert and service; a concert was a secular event and a service a sacred event. A concert could accommodate different sorts of mood, types and styles of music, but a service could not. They were able to accept a notion of difference within their concept of

concert, but they had a clear idea of what constituted a service where a specific tradition was appropriate. They saw our drumming and dancing as elements more appropriate in a secular concert – not a sacred service. They saw drumming and dancing in a carol service as a tradition of the colonised that should not have been integrated into the tradition of the colonisers.

Another criticism was about the dance in our piece. The Yorùbá dances are sensual, but this does not usually cause anyone distress. It would appear that there are different conceptions of the body in the culture of the colonisers and the colonised. The colonisers were brought up in a particular Christian tradition with a split between body and soul. In this the soul is regarded highly, whereas the body is more problematic because of its association with immorality. However, the Yorùbá have a more positive and holistic attitude towards the body. For the Yorùbá, the “body is a site of culture, beauty, art, expression and spirituality” (Ajayi, 1998:3). Biblical texts do contain some ambiguity. On the one hand the body is seen as the temple of God, and, on the other, as weak flesh and the home of sin.²⁹ Whereas the first view is easy to fit with Yorùbá culture, the second requires a disembodied view of humanity which is incompatible with the deeply embodied tradition of Yorùbá drumming and dancing.

My other musical experience was in Winchester Cathedral. Here I was not playing the drum but observing English practice. As I was born and brought up in the Anglican tradition in Nigeria, I constructed my religious and liturgical identity around the denomination. The tradition followed a strict structure, which could be likened to the one the colonial missionaries brought to Nigeria. The service was kept within the schedule; everything was orderly, structured and strictly guided. Though the music was good, it was limited to the

²⁹ The Bible, Romans 8:13; II Cor.4:11; Gal. 5:13.

sound of a pipe organ and congregational hymns – no clapping, no drumming and no dancing.

However, because my own Christianity had been recontextualised into the Yorùbá culture, it did not fit into the cathedral culture. This made me opt for ‘The Church of Hampshire’ (TCH). Like the International Church of Budapest (ICB) in Hungary, TCH was a Pentecostal church that embraced praise and worship, which usually involved the use of guitars, drum set, etc. The successful recontextualisation of the *dùndún* in ICB made me think that I would be able to extend my practice to TCH with ease, but I was wrong.

4.4.2. The Church of Hampshire (TCH)

One Sunday morning I decided to attend the service in TCH. I also decided that I would be there on time to partake in the praise and worship session, which I believed would play a part in deciding whether I could call TCH my church or not. The following expressions in italics were my impressions about TCH on my first visit.

I arrived in the church, which is right in the middle of a quiet city in Hampshire. The church moved there from their own building, when it could no longer accommodate the large number of people attending the church. The building did not carry the name of the church; I would not have thought it to be a church if I had passed there on week days. There was a table beside the entrance with some religious books, CDs and tapes containing sermons by famous preachers. This gave me the impression that the church was strict in their doctrinal approach to Christianity. One of their ushers welcomed me and took me to an empty seat. All the people around greeted me, they knew I was a newcomer.

Like a tourist, I was looking around and gathering my opinion about the church. The church had a proscenium arch and songs and information were projected to the wall above the altar. There was a pulpit on the altar with some musical instruments such as guitars, a set of drums, two electronic keyboards and two tambourines. There was no conga, sax or trumpet, which are commonly used for dance music in gospel churches. I also noticed that there were no black people in the church on this day, but I saw two mixed race kids with their white mother.

A group of people went to the altar to lead the worship. I had thought they were the church choir but apparently not; they called themselves a band instead. The band consisted of a young vocalist who also played an amplified guitar; he was backed up by two other guitarists, one keyboardist, one drummer and two ladies as chorus who also played the tambourines.

They projected the songs onto the wall; I was familiar with some of them. In between the songs certain individuals came to pick up the microphone and spoke to the church. I did not know what that was supposed to mean, prophesy, preaching, comforting, admonishing, I just could not find the right word for it. Interestingly, before the first person finished talking, two people would already be waiting. So anyone could just come out and talk to the church.

A lady came out and started by telling us that God was in the church and he was answering our prayers, which I believe, not because she said so but because the Bible said where two or more people are gathered in God's name, he is there. She gave a testimony and read certain passages in the Bible to support her claims, I saw this as edification rather than prophesy. On this very Sunday, about three people spoke and by the time I realised it, many people had sat down, they could not stand any longer. I was not sure whether to follow this example or not. Also, because the talks were too long, we could not sing too many songs. The sermon was powerful and the singing was touching. However, I was quiet throughout the service. Irrespective of this, I decided that I would be attending the church as long as I was still in Winchester, but the point was how I could fit in with this strict structure.

Briefly, I will focus the analysis of this extract on the structure of the Sunday service. Firstly, the structure of the service was tight, but compared to the Cathedral it was loose.

Nonetheless, everything had been carefully structured except the individual messages, which were not in the programme.

Having attended TCH many times, it became apparent that the individual messages slot was an every Sunday occurrence. It was part of their liturgical tradition, which made TCH different from the other Pentecostal churches that I had attended in Nigeria and Hungary. However, I found a similarity between TCH and the *Aladura* churches among the Yorùbá in Nigeria, as messages in-between the service is emblematic of the *Aladura* churches. Despite this, music is never compromised as the realisation of the messages is usually done within the music, which is why the structure of the *Aladura* churches is very loose.

In TCH, the concept of time was ‘structured, ordered and numerical’. The leaders were very conscious of the time. As the messages took much time, the time allocated for praise and worship was cut short so that the church could finish as scheduled. In many African churches, the concept of time is very elastic and reckoned by the events. Furthermore, music is not usually compromised, because many African churches are grounded in African cultural values.

The other thing that I observed in TCH was the homogeneity of the church, which consisted mainly of middle class white people. This reduced the relationship between some members of the church and me to mere greetings. There were no common interests to talk about. There was still a gap between the colonisers and the colonised and there was no plan to bridge this.

Nonetheless, as the praise and worship formed part of my Christian identity, I continued to attend TCH.

I have been attending the church intermittently for almost two years now during which I was studying how I could fit in. One day, I decided to discuss my plan with the person who was leading the band, Matt. I met him after the service and told him that I would like to join the choir. Firstly, he told me that the church did not have a choir, rather they had a band and all the instrumentalists accompanied the singers on their various instruments. Based on their structure, he bombarded me with the following questions; ‘what would you like to do specifically’, ‘what instrument do you play and what part do you sing’? I managed to answer his questions one by one. However, he was astonished when I said that I would like to play the dùndún drum in the band.

When I saw his reaction, I quickly said a talking drum with the hope that he would be able to understand it literarily, but he did not. The next thing he said was ‘explain what you mean by that’, which I did. He later asked what the drum was made from; I also managed to tell him. To be honest, I was not expecting anything like this; it was just like an interview session. However, reading his body language it was either he wanted to go home early on that day or he was not pleased with my explanation. Suddenly, he asked me to put everything I have said in writing and also send him some pictures of the dùndún and gáangan, which I did. The following are the paraphrases of what he wrote in his email.

For example, he wanted to know a little bit about my Christian life and my background, how long I have been a believer and member of the church and where I was before joining the church. He also wanted to know whether I was then serving in the church and also whether I belonged to any community group. Lastly, he asked for what I play or do and my experience in worship and in bands. All these we had discussed in the church when we first met. However, I tirelessly replied to him but not sure if I was able to convince him as he did not reply to my emails. Despite this, I continued to attend the TCH just because it is closer to me than London. However, I still worshipped in those Africanised churches in London whenever I had time.

Matt was the gatekeeper in TCH. The term ‘gatekeeping’ contains many strands of thought and this has been dealt with by many scholars in different disciplines (Daley, 1990; Kraakman, 1986; Williams, 1980). Communication networks are very important for information gathering, transferring and processing in all organisations. The role of gatekeepers in this context is to act as a communication network between the internal and external contacts. S/he is part of an organisation and specifically represents the external contact.

Succinctly, the “gatekeepers are those key individuals who are both strongly connected to internal colleagues and strongly linked to external domains” (Tushman and Katz, 1980:1071). While an organisation can have a gatekeeper, an external contact can also have his/her own separate gatekeeper, but he/she must have a strong connection with the organisation or its gatekeeper. It is also possible for the organisation’s gatekeeper to act on behalf of both the organisation and the external contact. This was the case in the prison in Chapter Five.

Whether the external contact has a separate gatekeeper or not, the support and information s/he needs to succeed in an organisation is the ‘gate’ that the gatekeeper keeps. However, in TCH I had no separate gatekeeper, and I had no connection with Matt, the TCH’s gatekeeper.

As a gatekeeper, Matt had a specific role, to admit or not admit people who would like to enter the domain (band) that he controlled. He was in tune with Christian theology and the value system put in place by those who empowered him as a gatekeeper. The belief system of the TCH was shaped by a particular tradition and, as a gatekeeper, Matt was obliged to protect this tradition from anything that might contradict it. He was there to serve the interest of the dominant group by upholding the belief system and not by embracing any conflicting belief systems. Matt was concerned with the maintenance of the TCH tradition just as the

colonial missionaries did when they went to Africa. One of the strategies that he employed was a series of questions.

From another perspective, Matt's questions could be termed reasonable and logical. He did not know me or the nature of my spirituality. He had no knowledge of the Yorùbá culture, the *dùndún* drum and the context for which the *dùndún* is being used. As a result, he had no way of knowing whether I was speaking the truth about the drum. My explanation could have been a vain attempt to get him to sanction my request.

However, something was evident; there was a formal process that one had to go through before becoming a member of the band. I have likened this to the illustration of 'the hourglass of culture' by Pavis (1992):

In the upper bowl is the foreign culture, the source culture, which is more or less codified and solidified in diverse anthropological, sociocultural or artistic modelizations. In order to reach us, this culture must pass through a narrow neck. If the grains of culture or their conglomerate are sufficiently fine, they will flow through without any trouble, however slowly, into the lower bowl, that of the target culture, from which point we observe this slow flow. The grain will rearrange themselves in a way which appears random, but which is partly regulated by their passage through some dozen filters put in place by the target culture and the observer (Pavis, 1992:4).

In this illustration, Pavis expresses what usually happens when two cultures meet. What usually happens in that situation is contained in the hourglass illustration. Each culture will attempt to pick those things they are already familiar with from each culture and filter out those things that they see as strange to their values.

However, when two cultures do not meet on the basis of equality and independence, a stronger culture attempts to filter the weaker culture deliberately to make it look like it. When the colonial missionaries went to Nigeria, they tried to filter out the Yorùbá culture to make it bear a direct resemblance to their Christian values. Matt also wanted me to go through a filtering process. By the time I finished this process, I might have lost my identity and values and taken the identity and values of the colonisers. Furthermore, this filtering process would make me become ‘a true Christian,’ worthy of playing in the TCH band. This is the prevailing value system they had put in place.

One of the filtering processes was to be a member of a community group in the church. As observed, these community groups were formed based on three categories. The first one was based on members’ social backgrounds, especially their theological orthodoxy (Stark and Glock, 1968; Welch, 1981). The second was based on the ‘localism’ (Roof, 1978), similar to political constituency. The last was based on social homogeneity (McGavran, 1970). The groups consisted of middle class white men and women who shared common interests. The composition of the group (being all white) paved a way for a filtering process. However, as I was neither a white nor a middle class man, I did not see myself fit into any of the groups.

In my further observation, two core elements were central to the composition of these various groups. The first one was community – they were small and homogenous. The second was an

ecclesiastical element; “a tie that is maintained through courses, conferences, circulation of tapes and mimeographed materials, and through periodic visits by clergy and lay workers” (Levine, 1986:827).

Though these two core elements did not provide the basics of the group formation, I attached this meaning to the identity of the groups. I am Black and not White, a once colonised and not a coloniser. Hence, I felt that I did not fit into any of the groups, in which social composition was based on class or neighbourhood. Moreover, with this structure, it could take me many years before I would have the chance to join or play in the band, and by that time, I would have lost my appetite for it.

I finally met Matt one Sunday after the service. It was a good feeling, but this particular Sunday, I did not take my drum with me as I did not know that I would see him. We discussed our previous emails and the pictures of the dùndún and gángan that I sent to him and we further discussed drumming. He encouraged me to keep coming to church. I promised to bring a gángan drum for him to see if he wanted and he said yes. The following Sunday I went to church with a gángan drum, but Matt did not come to church, another person from the band led the music session. However, I met Matt three weeks later and fortunately enough I took one gángan drum to church. I met him after the service. I played the drum to show the drum's pitches so that he, Matt, could have a clear understanding of why it is called a talking drum. Whenever I played the dùndún or gángan to show people how the drum talks, they were usually astonished by the level of accuracy. But Matt and his friends looked unimpressed. I gave him the drum; he looked at it and gave it to the person who played a drum set and two conga drums.

They did not pass any negative comments; 'it looks interesting' was their comments. They did not tell me their meeting/rehearsal time or whether I would be playing with them in the near future. However, they were amazed when I demonstrated my skills on two conga drums. 'So you can play conga as well'; said Matt with a smile. 'I can play any percussion' I replied with a smile. He replied, 'like I said before, keep coming to church maybe sometimes you can play conga with us'. I quickly said to him that I would like to play my talking drum; 'we shall see, just keep coming to church'; he said.

During our discussion, I observed that when Matt saw the drum, its physical appearance had changed his perception of the drum. The phrase; *'it looks interesting'* carried added values. The drum was made of pure animal skin and unpolished wood. This characteristic might have created an impression that it was a ritual drum with magical power. This would have been a negative impression for him. This view is similar to that of the colonial missionaries who believed that "there was evil in the drum" (Yankson, 2007:3). The obvious question is: what makes African drums evil and western instruments holy? It is also possible that Matt had read the colonial literature about the *dùndún* before and the appearance of the drum confirmed what he read. Even if he had not read it, documentary materials about African cultures are readily available through technology – television, Internet, most of which have a detrimental effect on Black culture.

However, having seen Matt's reaction, I tried to explain to him and others that the *dùndún* is a talking drum, a concept that I thought they might understand. This seemed to have complicated the issue. It seemed to me that they could not grasp the idea just like the colonial missionaries. Perhaps they conceptualised the term 'talking drum' as a communication device for evoking some ancestral spirits. This means its sound might induce trance and its rhythms

might be strangely hypnotic in the church. This was a misunderstanding, as the notion of a talking drum is based on the musical role of the drum within its ensemble and expressiveness of individual drummers as we saw in Chapter Two.

Here we see another contrast between the church in Budapest and TCH in Hampshire. What was valued in Budapest, Hungary was not valued in Hampshire as a result of a different belief system, which was underpinned by the colonial legacy. However, Matt could not reinterpret the *dùndún* within the new paradigm – space (church), which is one of the domains in the model in Chapter One. Because of my experience in Nigeria and Hungary, I was able to envisage its reinterpretation within the context of the church, but Matt, who did not have my experience, was not able to do it.

However, as the *dùndún* had not gone through the filtering process, Matt then suggested conga, which had already gone through the process. Although conga is believed to have originated from Africa, it has been refined to bear the authentic imprint of the colonial cultural values. It was on the basis of these values that conga made it into many churches in Europe, including TCH. Reflecting on this, I thought perhaps, if I had taken the *dùndún* such as the one I played in the carol service at Winchester University that had gone through the filtering process to TCH, Matt might have allowed me to play with them at some point. On the other hand, when I reflected on the controversy that the same talking drum generated, this cast doubt on the possibility of playing it in TCH. Moreover, even if he had allowed the drum in the church, he might still have asked me to go through a filtering process as a *dùndún* practitioner.

One reason that I insisted on playing the *dùndún* in TCH was that it was a new thing and I thought that the TCH would welcome this as it is generally assumed that originality is obvious and prized higher in European cultures. However, Matt's reaction showed that not all Europeans value originality. It might be that he did not see playing the *dùndún* in TCH as originality, but rather as the introduction of a certain musical tradition and identity. Rather than risk losing their own identity, he decided to perpetuate the continuity of their own musical tradition.

The TCH drew their empowerment from their own musical tradition and so taking on another tradition might endanger this empowerment. Furthermore, as the *dùndún* drumming tradition is very powerful, the people playing leading instruments might have lost their power to the *dùndún* and me; cultural integration might have resulted in cultural disintegration. The leading instrument in this case was the guitar that Matt played, and he did not want to lose his power. My conclusion is that there was a cultural misunderstanding and misinterpretation of intention on both sides. As they were not willing to understand, I changed my church and went to the Cosmopolitan Church of Hampshire that had a large number of Nigerians and Yorùbá in the congregation.

4.4.3. The Cosmopolitan Church of Hampshire (CCH)

One notable factor that made me choose CCH was the large number of the Black and indeed Yorùbá in the church. Except where I make a particular reference to the Yorùbá, I will use black as a group identity for all Blacks in the church to “assert pride in [African] heritage” (Chan, 1998:43) and also to serve as “collective empowerment” (Kanneh, 1998:181).

In 2007, a well-known Yorùbá of my acquaintance, whom I will call Morisayo in this chapter, introduced me to CCH. She had been attending the church for a long time and she was a Sunday school teacher. We had known each other for a while and we were good friends. Cultural continuity and social ties also played an important role in choosing a church. One of the values that I shared with Morisayo was the importance of music in Yorùbá religious observance. This is an essential attribute that constitutes our 'Yorùbáness'. Favor also sees music as an essential attribute that constitutes blackness in African American culture (Favor, 1999). This suggests that music is an essential attribute for everyone who shares in the African heritage.

What Morisayo and I had in common was our Yorùbá heritage, and music is part of it. Considering that she lived over fifty miles from CCH, it seemed to me that she was also seeking for a church where this important part of her culture could be given a prominent place. The use of music as part of the religious observance had become part of her identity. And with a huge number of Yorùbá in the choir and church, there could never be a better place to worship for someone seeking an important part of her cultural identity. As Huddy says; "when the group is salient, group identity is paramount" (Huddy, 2001:131). For both of us, cultural continuity and ethnic identity were the salient facts of our identification with the church, not just Christianity as a religion.

We arranged to go together one Sunday and she took the trouble to come and pick me up in Winchester. Interestingly, we both represented two different cultures in our style of dressing. While she put on a Yorùbá dress, I was in a black suit. Bowie understands why; "the clothes people wear are one way of expressing identity" (Bowie, 2006:71). This was meant to be a message to the church that I belonged there. My mode of dressing was one of the strategies

for negotiating my identity in a church grounded in the colonial values. She did not need to do this as she had already negotiated her identity within that church.

On this particular day, the church held the Sunday service in one of the conference halls of a hotel in the town. It was their usual practice to worship in a bigger space whenever there was a special event such as an international day. Moreover, it gave the people with mobility problems an opportunity to attend. However, on ordinary Sundays, they usually worshipped in their church building, which was on the outskirts of the town. There were many people from different cultural backgrounds. I had not seen as large a number of black, and indeed Yorùbá, in a single church in Hampshire before then. As we arrived in front of the hotel, I stepped into a new and complex environment. The following expressions in italics are taken from my personal journal.

We arrived at the hotel which was in a big building adjacent to the railway station. I saw 2 taxis and an airport shuttle bus parking beside the main entrance; it was a rowdy environment. I was completely baffled by their presence; I had in my mind that I was going to a church, but forgot it was inside a public place. It was a mixed feeling when I reflected on the teaching of Jesus Christ in the temple in Jerusalem where he chased people out and asked them not to turn his father's house into a trading centre.

However, in the case of CCH, it was the church that went to the trading centre. I saw some men in suits and women in blazers. I could hardly differentiate the church ushers from the hotel staff as they both put on black/navy blue suits. The dual identity of the building had altered everybody's identity including mine. Whilst some were ushering in the people who had come to attend the church in the lobby, some hotel staff were also busy attending to the lodgers who were checking in and out of their rooms. The taxi and airport shuttle buses were also waiting outside to pick them up.

The building reflected the duality of its usage – the hotel and the church. Hence, some people might see holding a church in a hotel as unconventional. What is a church? In simple terms, a church can be defined as a building where Christians gather for religious purposes. This means any building can be used for holding a church service as long as it is consecrated. The Bible also defines the church as the people who worship in the building. A congregation can go through the process of consecrating a building, often carried out by a leader such as a bishop. So the main significance can be located in either the building or the people or both together.

One black man in a navy blue suit ushered me into the auditorium; it was packed with people. The atmosphere was lively, people were exchanging greetings, children running up and down and the band was busy doing the sound test. I did not want to look conspicuous, and hence, I moved slowly along the back of the room to see if I could find myself a seat. However, the ushers wanted me to fill the empty seat in the middle opposite the platform, it was a good place. The platform was directly opposite me, and the instrumentalists were down beside the platform. So, I could see both the choir and instrumentalists clearly. I could also read from the two screens mounted on both sides very well.

I looked around and saw many black people; some in African dresses. They outnumbered their white counterparts; some of them were university students. I was so happy, but did not show this outright. The resident pastor welcomed everybody before the service began and made this powerful message; ‘whatever your problem today, you will never go back the same’. I understood this statement in a spiritual sense, what I guess he meant was that people would leave the church happily with their lives transformed.

The church choir mounted the platform to begin the service with praise and worship. Three of them were white and one of them was the son of the pastor, others were black. All instrumentalists were white nonetheless. In a Pentecostal church, it is not enough to have a strong choir; the pastor must also like music. In most cases the pastors are also good singers; some even play instruments. So, it was not new to see the pastor's two sons actively engaged in musical activities, one singing and the other playing the guitar.

Just before the guest speaker delivered his message, the church choir treated us to a special number. The black lady who led the singing was amazing; she was young and exuberant, she symbolised Africa's vitality, her spirit was high. The choir's performance was wholly as 'a breathtaking display of physical agility'. The power of music rocked the whole auditorium on this day, and I was lifted up. I had a shivering or tingling sensation; I have not had that kind of experience for a very long time, it was inexpressible. The church accomplished the statement made by the resident pastor before the service began. I said to myself; 'wow! God is in this hotel/church'. I left the place fulfilled.

The CCH was founded and managed by a white British family. However, the mode of worship was not influenced wholly by the colonial culture. It had been revised. The church was culturally diverse, as the population of black and Asian people was more than their white counterparts. Black and Asian students also accounted for more than half of the youth in the congregation and the choir was predominantly black people. Their cultures had influenced the mode of service. They played music elaborately and encouraged dancing. They employed their musical trait to empower the church. The choir did not sing from a hymn book, which meant they were not inhibited by any objects in their hands. This tradition reflects an essentially oral culture. They clapped their hands and danced. They acted out the lyrics of the songs through facial expressions and hand movements. They got the whole congregation on

their feet and the service was very electrifying and powerful. This active role of the blacks in the church empowered me.

I observed and studied the church and congregation every time I went to church. The services were always very good and the spirits were always very high; thanks to the music. I also noticed that there was a strong sense of friendship among the congregation. There were different small groups comprising people of the same interest. At the end of every service, people would look for their friends. While some leave the church together, others would stay behind for a while and discuss. The groups were not formally set up; they were based on mutual friendship. These small groups were not all that racially formed though some were only white and some only black, but some members of the choir black and white often discussed and left the church together. What I observed was that some of them were living in the same area or working or studying together or had been in the church together for a long time. The church was not their only meeting place; they often also met in the week.

Whilst waiting for my friend to finish with the children in the Sunday school, I joined hands with others to pack the chairs. We would exchange greetings but they would later break away to join their old friends. While I found it difficult to find my identity in the community groups at TCH because of the cultural/racial homogeneity and bureaucracy, the social ties that bound people together outside the church were obstacles to integration in CCH. It seems to me that every institution has its own problem and style.

Among internal factors examined in church growth studies, those related to friendships appear to play a crucial role because “friendships with fellow attendees significantly influence churchgoers’ decision to join a congregation” (Olson, 1989: 432). So people are more likely to attend church if their friends go there too. Most church friendships also develop outside of worship services, either because they work or study together or live in the same area.

In the CCH, the congregation formed cohesive communities within and outside the church and also organised programmes. They congregated before and after the service to discuss some common interests. Clapp (1996) has comprehensively discussed ‘The Church as a Community of Friends’ in his book *A Peculiar People: the Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society*. The studies of unconventional religious movements (Harrison, 1974; Lofland, 1977; Lofland and Stark, 1965) also suggest that converts sometimes join churches in order to satisfy their social needs. This means that the church has bi-functional purposes, firstly, as a place of worship and secondly, as a forum for fostering social and cultural continuity.

As observed in the CCH, the level of friendship amongst the existing members did not allow new members to get assimilated into the church culture easily. In my experience, big churches generally provide newcomers with fewer friendship opportunities. They seem to have natural limits to their ability to incorporate newcomers. Olson explains:

High-tenure members have as many church friends as they desire or have time for. Their church friendship needs are met almost exclusively by other high-tenure members. They become satisfied and lose interest in making friends with newcomers. Cliques develop, and newcomers leave because they feel unwanted. For newcomers, it may be hardest to make friends in “friendly” congregations. Such high-tenure churches are effective in retaining current members but poor at assimilating newcomers (Olson, 1989: 433).

In the CCH, I found myself in a situation different from the TCH. As I mentioned earlier, one of the reasons why I left the TCH was that there were no black people in the congregation, and the composition of the community groups in the church, which were predominantly white middle class people. However, despite the fact that many groups in CCH consisted of Nigerians or Yorùbás, I was not able to break into any of them. What this means is that what tied people together were not just racial, cultural, ethnic, national identities and values, but also social values.

There were different national flags on the walls below the ceiling in the church main building, which supposedly represents the nationalities of the church members. This did not necessarily mean that all these nationals were still attending the church. The pastor made one statement about the flag on this Sunday just before the service began; ‘if the flag of your country is not represented, please let us know and we would get it there’. I saw flags of many African nations including Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, South Africa, Ivory Coast, Senegal, etc. The white young lady who is the church administrator did not make the announcement that day. A young black lady from Nigeria made it; the reason was that the church would be having an international Sunday in about four weeks from that time. Hence, a young black lady handled the announcement. She told us to come in our native dresses and to also bring traditional food if we can. I have imagined myself playing the talking drum on the day of this event, but I have to discuss this with the choirmaster.

The announcement was over, but just before the choir started to sing their special number, the pastor asked us to watch a video of the activities of the church in Gambia. The church was fully involved in humanitarian and planting of churches in India and Gambia. The founding pastor of the church who had now transferred the affair of the church to his son had visited their newly planted church in Gambia with one of his grandsons. They held the service in a small hall that looked like a cocoa store (because it was painted with whitewash paint). They had a choir with one synthesiser and a number of drums some of which were upright and pegged drums with animal fur on the covered skin. They sang songs in their native language; the drumming was accompanied with clapping. I saw the senior pastor sweating as he danced to the music of the church choir. The spirits were high; people were dancing and worshipping in African way.

After watching the video, the pastor made a reference to it and the forthcoming international day. I particularly jotted this statement down; 'I like the way the African worship God, they worship him in dancing and singing. So, you Africans here don't be Europeans, worship God as Africans'. This statement coupled with the special number from the choir empowered me and gave me the confidence that I needed. After the service I called the attention of one Nigerian lady who was also part of the choir and told her my intention to play the gáangan drum in the church.

She was excited and replied me with a mixture of Yorùbá and English; 'Oh God! Sister o de wa loni o, se e ma wa ni next week'? (Oh God! What a shame and sister did not come today, would you come to the service next week?), I said yes. Again, from our discussion I noticed that the choir leader was also a Yorùbá lady, who will be referred to in this chapter as Yemi. However, she asked me to talk to the pastor about playing drum before next week. She helped me stop the pastor, but left while I was talking to him.

In my opinion, the flags hanging on the wall situated the church within global culture and also suggested that the church valued diversity. However, the flags did not represent the cultural identities of the congregation, but their national identities. This suggested to me that

the church prized national identities higher than cultural identities because there was nothing on the wall that depicted the cultural identity of the congregation. However, through observation, I noticed that some people valued their cultural identity more. The level of enthusiasm that Yemi showed towards my idea was a good example. This suggested that her empowerment was in her Yorùbá cultural identity and not in her national identity.

The flags also gave me another impression as a newcomer. They suggested to me that the nationals of these flags were still members of the church. However, having attended the church for a while, it became apparent that many nationals from some of the countries represented by the flags were no longer members of the church for whatever reasons. So the flags could be seen as another form of publicity device to encourage newcomers to join the church community.

Briefly, I want to reflect back on the empowerment statement made by the senior pastor after watching the video from Gambia; *'I like the way the African, worship God, they worship him in dancing and singing. So, you Africans here don't be Europeans, worship God as Africans'*. My interpretation of this statement is that the pastor noticed that the black people in the church were moving towards the cultural values of the colonisers in the way they practise Christianity. My other interpretation was that the senior pastor found his empowerment in the Christian tradition of the colonised. Hence, I had assumed that the pastor would welcome my idea. Moreover, the values of the colonised were already present in CCH; singing, drumming and dancing were already part of the service.

The pastor asked me to bring the drum to play in the following week. He handed me over to John, the band leader who played the drum set. John later asked me to bring the drum to the choir practice at 9 o' clock the following Sunday. I arrived in the church for practice at around 8.30 am. Yemi did not come to church, so I gave my gángan to John. Whilst looking at it, the pastor came, looked at it and gave it back to John without making any comments. John then asked me to wait. There was no practice before the service. They had had a choir practice in the week. I went back to John before the service started, but he told me that there was no extra microphone. Actually, there were extra microphones.

I went to the pastor with the hope that he would overturn John's decision, but he asked me to wait for the second service at 1 o'clock. I was not sure whether to stay for the second service or not. Reading their body language, I went back to Winchester after the service. I did not go to church the following week. I managed to see Yemi two weeks later. I told her the story, but she said she could not do anything about it. She said she was in charge of the people singing because the majority of them were black. John oversaw the affairs of the choir in practice. This settled the whole idea of playing a dùndún drum in the church, which I had previously thought to be 'my church'.

John played a similar role to Matt in the TCH. He was the church gatekeeper, the one empowered to keep the Church's gate. Like his counterpart in the TCH, John played the leading instrument, a synthesiser, and he was also the band leader. As part of his role as a gate-keeper, he sanctioned who would be allowed or not allowed in through the gate that he was asked to keep. On this particular Sunday when I took the drum to the church, there was an opportunity for me to play, but John kept the gate locked. This was different from the ICB in Budapest where the gatekeeper let us in without any problem and a cultural diversity was celebrated in a particular context. This context enabled us (the blacks in the church) to plan the event and carry out the action, which led to its success.

My experience in both the TCH and the CCH was different from this. Throughout my time in both churches, a separate day was not set aside to celebrate Christianity in African tradition. What they celebrated instead in the CCH was an international day. Both the TCH and the CCH shared some similarities in terms of how they viewed Christianity, the *dùndún* and its tradition and my identity as a practitioner. Below is the analysis of the two churches.

4.5. General analysis of the two case studies

One of the ways to achieve cultural understanding in any society is by “acknowledging the existence of ethnic diversity and ensuring the rights of individuals to retain their culture” (Inglis, 1996:16). As we have seen in this chapter, Inglis’ view was not shared by the TCH and the CCH. The reasons, all of which I perceived as a result of the legacy of colonialism, will be analysed under different sub-headings below.

4.5.1. Misconception and misunderstanding

Colonialism had a planned motive and this was underpinned by the assumptions of the colonisers about the colonised. During the colonial era across Africa, the missionaries regarded indigenous African music as imperfect and unworthy to be used in their churches. The colonial missionaries had a negative projection on the musical culture of the colonised. They conceptualised the *dùndún* as an invocation instrument used at Yorùbá religious ceremonies and shrines, which saw its sound as potentially inducing trancing in the church with its hypnotic beats and rhythms. However, this was not a well-grounded criticism. Interestingly, this misconception affected the reception of the *dùndún* in TCH and CCH. Furthermore, the conception of the colonisers is that the colonised did not practise pure Christianity; they had embedded their own cultural values within their faith position. As a result, the cultural values of the colonised did not receive a stamp of truth by the colonisers.

Some of the values that the TCH and CCH approved and acknowledged were those that the colonial missionaries established as truth. However, because these values were based on the European cultures, this placed the Yorùbá cultural values in direct conflict with the European values. This happened through interpretation of culture. The interpretation of cultural values of the colonised was done from the cultural paradigm of the European cultures. Thus, their interpretation of the *dùndún* and its traditions was not grounded in the understanding of the Yorùbá culture, but in Eurocentric and colonial views.

Interpretation of other people's culture is a complex issue. For any interpretation to take place, it is important for the interpreter to understand what is to be interpreted, not only by intellectual analysis, but by understanding it from the point of view of the people from that culture. Any interpretation must include an emic and etic perspective and take into account the views of those within and outside the culture. The interpreters of my Yorùbá culture in the TCH and the CCH were Matt and John respectively. Their interpretation of the *dùndún* was not with reference to the intentions, beliefs, ideals, and values of the Yorùbá and the *dùndún*. Rather, their judgment was based on assumptions, which were underpinned by the colonial legacy.

Furthermore, the interpretation of the TCH and CCH was not based on the relevance of the drum in its new context – time, location and metaphor. Once an object is taken from one context and put in another, the relevance of the object can be placed within the new context. This is because a change in the location is also a change in the context. For example, there are many ritual objects from Africa in the British museum in London. Since they have been taken out of the ritual context, they can no longer be regarded as ritual objects; they are there to serve a different purpose. Even within its ritual context, an object will need to be empowered

through ceremony before it can become powerful. In my opinion, for any objects to be effective and powerful, they will have to be put back into their ritual contexts. The *dùndún* drum that I took to the church was not taken from a shrine in Nigeria and therefore had no ritual contexts.

However, as the *dùndún* was construed as a ritual drum, this placed my identity within the pagan paradigm just like the practitioners during the colonial time. Therefore, questions about my Christian life and whether I was a believer or not suggested to me that Matt was not convinced about my level of Christianity. What Matt wanted to see embedded in me was the values of Christianity given to me by the colonial missionaries. He wanted to see in me the same Christianity that defined his own Christianity. However, I had already modified this by means of my own thinking and experiences. This was seen as a threat to the religious identity of the colonisers.

4.5.2. Cultural imperialism

Cultural imperialism can be defined as “the universalisation of a dominant group’s experience and culture and its establishment as the norm” (Young, 1990: 59). In cultural imperialism, a country imposes its cultural values on the other country, sometimes through force. For example, America and its allies are engaging in what I can call cultural imperialism in many countries by imposing what they call democracy on them without attempting to contextualise this idea within particular cultures. Similarly, Christianity means different things to different people. Nonetheless, the dominant group often wants their representation of a discourse to prevail over others.

Under cultural imperialism, which Schiele (2005) also refers to as cultural oppression, the worldviews of those who are not in the dominant group are not validated. For example, the worldviews and cultural values of the black people in the TCH (although they were in the majority in the congregation) were regarded as less significant. The experience and interpretations of the white minority that controlled the church were endorsed and imposed on the black majority. This practice was similar to that of the colonial missionaries.

The experiences and interpretations of the black majority found no validation and expression in the church, despite their active involvement in some activities, such as teaching the children in Sunday school and singing in the choir; they could not express their traditional and cultural perspective. The earlier writings about African cultures and the perception of the imperialists have “rendered the history and cultural traditions of Africans particularly vulnerable to vilification from cultural oppression” (Schiele, 2005: 804). This legacy has contributed enormously to the disproportionate representation of African cultures in the hierarchy of the church and many institutions, such as universities and colleges in Hampshire. This cultural oppression can have the effect of preventing minority voices being heard in the corridors of power within these influential institutions, as in the CCH.

This cultural oppression which Martin and Martin (1995) refer to as cultural amnesia suggests that when a group of people are culturally oppressed and suppressed, they collectively lose the content and character of the group’s history and traditions. Though this finding is drawn from the experience of the African American, it could be seen as relevant to the situation of the black in the CCH.

This may not be on the same scale as the African Americans, because the black people in CCH were students and immigrants who have chosen to live in England voluntarily.

Nonetheless, their continued exposure to colonial values and their inability to have a voice in the affairs of the church can make their cultural memories diminish over time. This may not necessarily mean that they have a cultural reference as blacks. However, their cultural reference could be that of the dominant culture as a result of what Kambon (1998) calls 'cultural misorientation'. Perhaps, this is what the senior pastor had observed, when he asked them to worship as Africans and not as Europeans.

As in the colonial time, cultural disorientation was the intention of the missionaries. This was also the intention of Matt at TCH when he advised me to play conga instead of my *gáangan* drum. He preferred to see me using my *dùndún* drumming skills on conga that has already established its place in the colonial culture. He wanted to prevent me from presenting and retaining my Yorùbá particularity and to put on a colonial one. He wanted to indoctrinate me into the colonial cultural values so that I could lose my sense of identity and forget who I was culturally. These values were not only culturally different from those of the Yorùbá, but devalued my Yorùbá drumming traditions.

This cultural imperialism, particularly in the CCH, could have implications for the black majority in the church. Firstly, it could lead to what some scholars call low cultural, ethnic, or racial esteem (Belgrave *et al.*, 1994; Brooks, 1996). To put this in the context of the black people in the CCH, low cultural and ethnic esteem could prevent them from expressing their cultural and ethnic identity, and low racial esteem could prevent them from formulating a group identity. If this happens they could lose the potential for developing maximum individual and group self-confidence and self-pride. This could turn the active people into

passive people, and also prevent them from growing spiritually. The adverse effect of this is that they could lose their spiritual empowerment; and once this happens they may not be able to empower the congregation spiritually anymore.

Although my individual effort to take this bold step could be viewed by some critics as ethnocentrism, this was not my intention. My intention was to encourage cultural understanding and also to bridge the gap between the colonisers and colonised. It was also meant to be a wake-up call to the blacks who were already losing their sense of cultural reference. Perhaps, the *dùndún* would have helped them regain their cultural consciousness and pride, which the dominant culture had suppressed.

Although the *dùndún* is conceived as an empowering musical instrument, it could also have taken power away from the dominant instruments. What this might have meant was that if the *dùndún* had been integrated into the musical culture of the church, the power vested in the hands of Matt and John, who were both the band leaders and gatekeepers in both churches, might have had to be shared between them and me. Furthermore, if the congregation found their empowerment in the *dùndún* rhythms and melody, the drum could have taken power from the existing musical instruments in the church. However, if this had happened, it might have meant recognising the culture the colonisers had tried to suppress and oppress.

The church's musical style was already a source of pride for the dominant group that created it. The style represented power and authority. However, if the *dùndún* was integrated successfully, a new style of music might have been born, and power might have shifted from the colonisers to the colonised. The blacks in the church might have felt more empowered.

That empowerment might have meant disempowerment for the dominant group. This might have led to rivalry; their fear was of cultural disintegration.

In my opinion, the fundamental problem was the dominant group's fear of losing its position of power which would affect their identity. The hostility to the *dùndún* could be termed as "the expression of identity-anxiety" (Spencer, 1994:550). However, in my opinion based on my experience in Europe, integration can take place through mutually-agreeable contact, which can then lead to interdependencies that require no loss of power and identity.

It was not my intention to take over the church musically; we might have shared the role of leading the choir. As a matter of fact, the view of some scholars (like Kanter, 1979 and Tannenbaum, 1968) is that an organisation can only grow effectively if the superiors share power with their subordinates. When power sharing takes place, this can lead to a stronger organisation. Perhaps, if John and Matt had shared power with me in the bands, the contribution of the *dùndún* could have made the church music stronger and both John and Matt would have felt less stress. This was my experience in Nigeria and Hungary. Everyone might have been empowered.

Though the integration of the culture of the colonisers and colonised might cause conflict, this could have been mutually agreed through dialogue. In practice, both the *dùndún* and the other western instruments – guitars, drum sets and synthesiser – might have continued to develop concurrently, acting in mutually reinforcing ways even though they might be culturally unrelated. Furthermore, the usual role of the *dùndún* as a principal instrument in most of the Nigerian bands, could have been reduced, a step I was willing to take. As a strand in the spiral model, this was part of my plan for the two churches. The problem with the

people in power is often that they do not always want to share power with anybody and “those who are dominant will put systems in place to see that they remain dominant” (Boyce-Tillman, 2007:11).

In terms of identity, John and Matt had a fixed notion. However, both culture and identity are not fixed in my view of identity. They can be created or reshaped in many ways. For example, when a new musical style is created as a result of contact with different musical cultures, the new style becomes the new identity. A number of musical styles have resulted from the contact between the culture of the colonisers and the colonised in Nigeria. It is possible to acquire “identities, share them, maintain them over time, and pass them on to the people” (Rival, 1997: 138). Hence, I was willing to share my own identity with the church. However, in this situation the colonisers seemed more willing to impose their identity on others than to develop a new identity by integrating me into their musical culture.

Institutional identity is another strong factor that I observed in the TCH and the CCH. This is the identity that distinguishes an organisation from other organisations. There are two concepts of institutional identity as identified by scholars, but I will refer to one, which defines it as “a concept that organisations use to characterise aspects of themselves” (i.e., identity as a self reflection) (Albert and Whetten, 2004:89). Every institution has its own set of values with which it wants to be identified. This can include the name, product and style. In the TCH and the CCH, the musical style was part of their institutional identity and they were not ready to compromise this with the identity of the colonised, which they had once rejected and termed primitive.

4.5.3. Institutional and personal behaviour

The institutional behaviour of any organisation is not fixed; institutional and personal behaviour can affect the level of cultural integration in an organisation. This is partly due to what Ringer and Glock (1955) refer to as external pressures. Thus cultural integration can be the manifestation of how individuals and organisations confront and respond to the contextual change, which the external pressures can bring. However, the success or failure of cultural integration can depend very much upon the organisational structure of an institution. The dominant group that controls the organisation can be conservative or liberal; they can choose either to allow integration or not. They are the faces of the institution, and the image they project then becomes part of the institutional behaviour.

How does institutional behaviour obstruct cultural integration? Individual behaviour is often regulated by institutional behaviour through strict policies and codes of conduct. If institutional beliefs and norms are regulated by a group of people of the same ideology, any external contacts outside their beliefs can be seen as a threat, and thus rejected. For example, the belief of the dominant people in the TCH and the CCH about the *dùndún* was negative, though this might not have reflected the view of the congregation in general. Hence, the hostile reception in CCH and TCH, for me, was both an individual and institutional behaviour.

Internal unity amongst individuals who shared the same ideology also contributed to the hostility to the *dùndún* and me in TCH and CCH. This internal unity stimulated cooperation amongst these individuals. For example, I observed that the unity between John and the pastor in CCH strengthened their social ties. This strong internal bond (usually among members of the dominant people) in an organisation can lead to animosity towards an

individual member who is not a member of the dominant group, therefore resulting in a form of xenophobia. This is usually caused by the elimination of individual differences by the dominant group, via ostracism.

Building on Derrida's critique of the "metaphysics of presence", Young (1989) argues that the ideal of impartiality upon which liberal justice is grounded produces a "logic of identity that seeks to reduce differences to unity" (Young, 1989: 251). *Différance* is a term which Derrida uses to describe the origin of presence and absence; it is the "historical and epochal 'unfolding' of Being..." (Derrida, 1982:22). In French, the verb "différer" means both "to defer" and "to differ". Thus, *différance* may refer not only to the state or quality of being deferred, but also to the state or quality of being different. In this context, *différance* may be the condition for that which is deferred, and it may be the condition for that which is different. Hence, Derrida explains that *différance* is the condition for the opposition of presence and absence.

My presence and absence in this context represented the potential presence of Yorùbá values. This became in the end an absence, because of the presence of colonial cultural values. However, colonial cultural values were the particular *différance* and experience that prevailed in the TCH and the CCH. Since these values did not figure in either my identity or my experience, I did not measure up to those standards put in place by the dominant group. Hence, "my difference was constructed as deviance and inferiority" (Fierlbeck, 1996). Not only were my experience and values ignored and silenced, they also became devalued as a result of how I constructed my identity.

4.5.4. Hierarchical structure

In the hierarchical structure of the two churches, certain values were given power. In TCH and CCH, the hierarchical structure was mapped out along lines of race, gender, culture, spirituality and class, which drew the boundary between the white and black, colonisers and colonised. Although these values and the structure of their hierarchy were not enunciated, I observed this through the behaviour of some people in the two churches.

The aforementioned values were ranked and stratified, and priorities were given to each value “according to the principle that the [values] with higher rank prevails over the [values] with lower rank” (Galtung, 1968:375). What this means is that a higher rank for one value excludes the possibility of a higher rank for another. The colonial values automatically became the highest ranking values in the two churches. In an egalitarian society, a number of values can be ranked as of equal value. As my principles are basically egalitarian, no cultures or values need to prevail over another. The ultimate goal of the structure of the two churches was to perpetuate and maintain the power and influence of one race over the other.

The first high ranking value was race; the white were ranked higher than the black in TCH and CCH as in the colonial missionary churches. The missionaries held the view that nothing good could come out of the ‘Jerusalem’ of the black people:

It is worth recalling that the modern missionary movement was inheritor not only of the notion of a territorial Christianity which saw Europe, and such extensions of its ways of life as existed, as the embodiment of the Christian religion; it was heir also to the idea of a ‘great chain of being’, which ranked

‘White’, ‘Red’, ‘Yellow’ and ‘Negro’ races in that descending order in a grand schema of humanity (Bediako, 1995: 194).

The theory of a ‘great chain of being’ ranks the Black (Negro) the lowest; the reason is that everything black is considered bad. The word ‘black’ became a metaphor for evil and the epitome of badness – Black Market or Business, Black Sunday, Blackout, Black Death, etc. Why is the Devil always painted black and Jesus white? Why is goodness attached to whiteness and badness attached to blackness? The same metaphor sees black magic worse than white magic.

As a Black man, I therefore belong to the group of people with the lowest rank. My racial identity had already shaped the views of the gatekeepers in TCH and CCH about me as inferior, uncivilised, unbeliever and pagan. These ideologies had been handed down by the colonial missionaries, who believed in the racial superiority of Europeans in the conviction that they were the most civilised culture. In their view, they represented the light of the world and the Black represents darkness. Hence, the two gatekeepers, especially Matt in the TCH was not convinced of the validity of my Christian faith.

The churches in Hampshire held views similar to the colonisers. Despite the fact that the black people were in the majority in the CCH, they were given a minority status within the church structure. There was only one black lady among the pastoral team; others were white, forming white supremacy in the church. The situation of the lady priest in the CCH was similar to those of the Yorùbá priests in the missionary churches, who were not vested with power. My friend who introduced me to the church was not empowered despite being a Sunday school teacher. This was also evident amongst the choir, where the view of the black

majority was not valued. Their talents and active roles within the church were not enough to make them equal to their white counterparts. For this reason, my view was not welcomed because I belonged to the group ranked the lowest in the hierarchical structure of both churches. These phenomena can create a permanent race schism in the church as it did in the missionary churches in Africa, which eventually led to the breakaway of the African priests and the creation of indigenous churches in Nigeria.

We have already seen above that the *dùndún* was rated lower than the Western instruments so reflecting colonial values. This put me in a difficult situation in the TCH and the CCH.

Firstly, I belonged to the group of people ranked the lowest. Secondly, I was carrying a drum ranked the lowest within the Christian context and with my identity constructed around the drum; things could only get worse for me. Hence, the situation that I faced in the TCH and the CCH paralleled that of the *dùndún* practitioners during the colonial time. As I have said earlier, the *dùndún* practitioners were targeted directly by the missionaries who believed that they were the perpetrators of paganism. The missionaries gave the practitioners a simple option - to tear and burn their drums before coming to the church. Those who refused to comply with this were then expelled completely from the church and those who complied were silenced within the church.

Though I was not asked to tear and burn my *dùndún* drums, they were not welcomed in both churches. Both the *dùndún* and I were silenced in TCH and CCH. I could worship in TCH and CCH as long as I left the *dùndún* at home. They did not dispute the fact that a drum such as the *dùndún* could be played in a Christian church. For example, we saw people playing pegged drums on the video that the senior pastor brought from a church in Africa. For him,

this was not a great concern as long as they were not played in their church here in Hampshire.

Gender also played a part in the hierarchical structure in CCH particularly. The structure of the church reminded me of the early churches, in which patriarchy was dominant. For example, Yemi was subordinated to John despite the fact that she was the head of the choir. She was not as empowered as her role suggested; the actual power and musical affairs were vested in John's hand. What happened was that Yemi had to conform to the patriarchal (or even repressive) realities of church hegemony. By taking up the role of a 'choir master', she subscribed to "a rigidly coded set of behaviour" (Kanneh, 1998:180). She had to behave in the way that the dominant group wanted her to behave. Yeđenođlu observes that; "when one is perceived as a token and is entitled to speak only in a clearly delimited space, one is paradoxically silenced in a particular way" (Yeđenođlu, 1996:54).

Yemi was used as a token figure and this was reflected in our discussion. Her situation was similar to the Yorùbá priest and the *dùndún* practitioners who were silenced in the missionary churches. She told me that she would not have changed the situation even if she had been in the church when I met with the pastor and John. She could not object to any decision made either by the pastor or John even if the decision was against her interest or that of the black majority in the choir or church, because she did not have the power. The role of Yemi as a 'choir master' was not to make her a master, but to make her serve the interest of the masters who were the church leaders. This is where politics comes in.

4.5.5. The church politics

The view is that, “religion has always been political..., providing norms and values to guide and judge behaviour, offering symbols, leadership, and institutional resources to promote these ideas” (Levine, 1986:830). Religion and politics, even when in opposition, are more often in mutual support; they “are inseparable, and it is vain to try to divorce them” (Hocart, 1973: 76).

The politics of the church meant that the dominant people in the two churches were manipulative, which made it in many ways political in several related senses. The dominant people in both churches turned me into a toy that they could play with. In the TCH, Matt asked me to email him after we had had a long discussion about the drum. The face to face conversation put him under pressure and he was not able to state his mind. The email, on the other hand, is a faceless medium. Matt was able to say what he could not say during our face to face discussion. In the CCH, the situation was the same, as both the pastor and John pushed me from one to the other. John particularly was very manipulative, claiming that there were not sufficient microphones, when indeed there were two extra ones beside the console.

There was nothing more political in the CCH than the position of the black majority. For example, the blacks were not vested with power despite the fact that they were the majority in the choir in the CCH. The church only wanted their faces and not their thoughts and views. The political side of this was that their musical talents were resources and an ideal vehicle for bringing more people to the church. In this vein, their “cultural repertoire and tool kit provide meaning and impetus for resource mobilisation” (Barnes, 2005:967). The Black people became pliable instruments for the church to use in pursuance of its avowed development

objectives. Whilst the church became another medium for mass indoctrination like television, radio and internet, the black people simply became a new tool for advertising.

Church politics can and often do prevent change. For example, by integrating the *dùndún* into the church music, the church music might have been improved. It might have generated new interest in the congregation. Some might even have decided to learn to play the drum.

Furthermore, it might have led to cultural knowledge and thereby have created a fairer and more inclusive church. Church politics, on the other hand, in the form of hostility to a particular culture, might have led to the disintegration of the church and to the creation of smaller churches. This was the reason for the creation of indigenous churches across Africa and especially in the Yorùbáland, as I have discussed earlier. With the black, and indeed Yorùbá, in the majority in the CCH, the history might simply have repeated itself. Had they been more open to new ideas, the churches' political leaders might have their minds to create a new racial identity that would challenge cultural oppression.

4.6. Conclusion

The underpinning element in my rich experience of church music in Nigeria was the sharing of cultural values. In Hungary, cultural dialogue paved the way for understanding and subsequently integration of different musical cultures in the ICB. However, the cultural dialogue between the gatekeepers in TCH and CCH and me resulted in “a dialogue of the deaf” (Coser, 1979: 680) – a dialogue that yielded no positive result. This happened on both sides. On my side, this took place when I refused to play the conga instead of my *dùndún* drum. This was as a result of the somewhat fixed place of the *dùndún* in the construction of my identity. Moreover, I saw the idea of playing the conga as neo-colonialism and an attempt

to further oppress my already complex identity. I saw it as an oppressive result of past colonialism.

On the side of the two gatekeepers, the dialogue of the deaf took place when they refused to embrace a new discourse about my culture and the *dùndún*. The closed nature of their belief system made integration of the *dùndún* into the church music impossible. Their understanding of my cultural practice was underpinned by the legacy of colonialism. Also in the belief system of TCH and CCH, cultural representation was limited to the physical presence of people from different cultural backgrounds. They did not see how an object such as the *dùndún* could be part of my or their identity. This belief system paralleled that of the colonial missionaries and it was this that made the relationship between the church and me complex.

The legacy of colonialism also influenced how meanings were constructed around the *dùndún*, the concept of ‘talking drum’ and my identity. The TCH and CCH misinterpreted the *dùndún* as a result of its materials (raw animal skin and wood), one of the domains in the model of construction of meaning in Chapter One. If they had had an open system and constructed their meanings around other domains such as space, values, construction and expression, perhaps they might have changed their perspectives about the drum.

Every institution has its own tradition and established customary pattern of thought. Nonetheless, tradition need not be static; the use of the *dùndún* in other contexts in Hampshire was a good example of this. Tradition can change in the light of global culture – immigration, emigration, education, etc. However, both TCH and CCH preferred to cling to their own tradition. The integration of the *dùndún* and western instruments through previous

experiences had already become authentic church music for me. It might have produced an authentic experience for the congregation as well. In terms of originality, despite the fact that European culture generally prizes this highly in some contexts, my experience in the TCH and the CCH showed that not all Europeans favour originality. It might be that my idea did not fit into their understanding and definition of originality.

One of the reasons why I chose the CCH was the large number of black people in the congregation. I had thought that their active roles would be a source of empowerment for me. It would appear that they were not empowered, because their cultural values were not given high ranking. The power associated with the *dùndún* is what makes the practitioners powerful within the Yorùbá musical culture. However, as someone who belonged to a dominant group in Nigeria, I became marginalised in Hampshire. Thus, the *dùndún* and I operated at a subjugated level.

In the next chapter, I will be exploring the *dùndún* as an empowerment tool amongst the prison inhabitants in Portsmouth. As I have discussed in Chapter Three, the *dùndún* drumming profession is socially constructed as an act of begging within the Yorùbá culture. However, the power embedded in the *dùndún* raises the social status of the practitioners, which consequently boosts their confidence and increases their self-esteem. This is the prime focus of the workshops amongst the prison inhabitants in Portsmouth - to employ the *dùndún* to boost their confidence.



Fig. 20. A replica of the Yorùbá *dùndún* drum



Fig. 21. The author playing a *dùndún* replica at a festival in Hungary

Chapter Five

The *Dùndún* in the Prison Context

5.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the *dùndún* drumming workshops that took place at Her Majesty's Prison, Kingston in Portsmouth on 10 October 2006, 14 and 28 June 2007, and 5 July 2007. After the evaluation of the previous case study in the two churches in Chapter Four, I revisited the spiral model in Chapter Three in order to improve my practice as a *dùndún* practitioner and the outcomes of the workshops in the prison. The above dates were negotiated after re-planning had taken place. The workshops concentrated on the *dùndún* drumming as an empowering activity with the aim of increasing the self-esteem of the prison inhabitants. In this chapter, I tend not to use derogatory terms such as inmates or prisoners throughout except where I quote from the literature or HMP website. I am not the first person to take this stand. Balfour (2003) also thinks "it is wrong to label someone purely by a singular deed they have done" (Balfour, 2003:30). I believe the use of these terms can do damage to the self-esteem of the prison inhabitants and thus lead to a "negative self-identity" (Gilfard *et al*, 2004:173).

Hence, I have chosen to use the word 'mate' to mean friend. This was also the term that I used throughout the workshops. I did not relate to the prison inhabitants through their new identity within the prison system, but to their identity as fellow human beings. It is reasonable to suggest that the reception given to the *dùndún* and its acceptance as part of my identity was partly due to this. This friendly word removed the barrier that could have hindered the relationship between them and me. Therefore, it is for this reason that I use it in this context, so that it can create a positive attitude in the minds of anyone who reads this chapter towards

the people I am writing about. The names of the people in this chapter are anonymized. All the five concepts will run through the chapter, but ‘empowerment’ will be the main focus.

Balfour says; “the rehabilitative perspective argued for the need to empower people through helping them find legitimate ways of living in society” (Balfour, 2003: 3). This is also the aim of empowerment in this chapter; to help the mates in the process of rehabilitation. Hence, psychological empowerment was important in the context of the drumming workshops at HMP Portsmouth. Creative arts are part of the holistic approaches that many people and organisations (e.g. Geese Theatre, the TIPP Centre and Clean Break Theatre Company) are employing in the rehabilitation and restoration of the mates back into the community. In this way, through participation in some creative activities such as drumming, singing, acting and dancing, the mates can move away from the sense of guilt and change the way they think about themselves.

The aim of the *dùndún* drumming workshops in HMP Kingston, Portsmouth was built around the need to help to increase the self-esteem of the mates and also to boost their confidence. This chapter will analyse how I employed the *dùndún* drumming workshops as empowering activities amongst the mates in Portsmouth.

Later on in this chapter, I will be dealing with various forms of empowerment. However, the limitation of the prison system prevented a more systematic investigation of long term empowerment within the lives of the mates. These factors included the movement of the mates from one prison to another, the inability to be in touch with the mates after their prison terms and the lack of funding for a longer series of the *dùndún* workshop or the purchase of the drums by the authorities. The result of this limitation is that the claims made about

empowerment of the mates are based almost exclusively on observations during the workshops and phrases in the transcription in the interviews and group discussions. This is clearly an area where further research is possible within the necessary restrictions of the prison system.

Michel Foucault, a French philosopher, has written comprehensively about prison in his book, *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (1979). Hence, his theory on social constructionism will be used for the analysis of this case study. The theory will be used to examine and establish the discourse about prison and also to interrogate the retributive justice within the prison system.

5.2. Social constructionism

Social constructionism stems from a particular epistemological position and it is a view of how social phenomena in society are constructed. Social constructionism sees society constructed in relation to various ideological and political interests, particularly those of people holding power at any given time:

Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault and Gordon, 1980:131).

According to Foucault, central to social constructionism are discourse, knowledge and power. These three words form the basis for the structure of society and they are interrelated. In his earlier work, he defines discourses as “practices which form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972: 49). A discourse in this statement refers to a particular way in which an event or a person is represented or constructed. Thus, discourses are a set of meanings that form part of a particular object or event. However, “meaning, unlike biological material, is fluid, volatile and always open to change through this medium of social interaction” (Burr, 2003: 44). What this means is that a single object or an incident can have many meanings. Each meaning focuses on a particular aspect of the object or event. Each group of people constructs a meaning which favours their position and may disadvantage other positions. Each discourse usually claims to be the true representation of the event. These truth claims, particularly those made by people in positions of power, can have devastating effects on the power and identity of subjugated groups.

According to Foucauldian theory, there is a relationship between discourse, knowledge and power. They are intimately linked together through a multiplicity of discursive elements, and ultimately bond in the formation of discourse. There is a common saying that knowledge is power, which means if you have knowledge you can gain power. For example, if a researcher finds a solution to a problem in society, he can become an authority in his field, gain recognition and better status which can consequently lead to power. However, Foucault’s interpretation of the relationship between knowledge and power within the paradigm of social constructionism is different from this, and this will be discussed below.

Firstly, discourses are represented differently; a discourse that has a religious representation in a particular culture can have scientific representation in another. This is why social

constructionism in general concerns beliefs and values. For example, the discourse about evil spirit possession in the Yorùbá culture is usually constructed within a religious paradigm, but this can be constructed as mental illness in the west.

Therefore, when someone is said to be possessed by an evil spirit in the Yorùbá culture, people usually construct its discourse as the work of the witches. The belief is that the person has done something bad to the witches or one or both of the parents of the person have done something bad, which makes the witches take revenge on the person. Therefore, to avoid evil spirit possession is to respect the witches and/or behave in their (witches) acceptable way. This is the knowledge that has received a stamp of truth, which consequently gives power to the witches and witchdoctors.

Knowledge is the social construction that has received the stamp of truth from the people in power. These are the people who hold high social rank – the aristocrats, lords, politicians, witch doctors, chiefs, etc. Hence, for Foucault (1982), the knowledge that becomes the prevailing value system in a society is bounded and connected with power. This kind of relationship between knowledge and power is a great concern for Foucault.

The point is that every social construction comes with social practices and dictates the way that people have to live their lives, how to behave in a particular way rather than another, which ultimately marginalises alternative ways of behaving. What right an individual has in a society, who is in control, who can control, who is to be controlled, and who can arrest and punish others – all these are grounded in the version of knowledge as constructed by that particular society. All the constructions of knowledge are part of the social control.

Therefore, to exercise power is to draw upon the discourses that allow an action to be represented in an acceptable manner. For example, a judge who sentences an offender to a prison term acts upon the representation and construction of a discourse. As he constructs a discourse in a particular way, so also he produces knowledge that is associated with the discourse, which ultimately brings power with it. The operation of power is fundamental to the production of a discourse. This is why Foucault does not only see power as something that some people possess and some do not possess, but also as an effect of a particular social discourse.

Foucault suggests that power somehow inheres in institutions themselves rather than in the individuals that make those institutions function. It is the knowledge about a discourse that establishes 'truth', which ultimately produces power. "Power is always a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action" (Foucault, 1982:789). Power always entails a set of actions performed upon another person's actions and reactions. This view places phenomena like prison in the context of power relations within a particular social system. For example, the knowledge of a discourse that gives the judge power, also takes away power from the inmates he sends to the prison.

The prison system is a socially constructed phenomenon. This particular discourse is grounded in the belief that certain people deserve to be singled out for special attention and locked up for certain reasons. This belief is a social construct, one which gives birth to a prison system. Foucault speaks about how we might challenge social constructs by a process of deconstruction:

We must make allowance for the complex and unstable

process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power...Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it...there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy...(Foucault, 1990: 101).

How does a discourse undermine and expose power? As Foucault suggests, this can happen in the form of strategies of resistance. As a discourse produces counter-discourse/s, so also a counter discourse produces new knowledge and way of thinking. This means truth is not an absolute phenomenon. Truth is a system of ordered procedures; it regulates, distributes, circulates and operates statements. The important thing here is that truth, in Foucault's view, is not outside power, or lacking in power. The question of how to deal with and determine truth is at the base of political and social strife. However, when new knowledge is produced, the power that establishes the old knowledge as truth becomes vulnerable. Thus; "the power implicit in one discourse is only apparent from the resistance implicit in another" (Burr, 2003:69). Foucault states that power always faces resistance, and there can never be power without resistance; "where there is power there is resistance" (Sawiki, 1991, 56).

What this means is that resistance can be part of the mechanism for deconstructing social practices. For example, certain knowledge constructs prison within a retributive paradigm and another one constructs it within a restorative paradigm. As new knowledge establishes restorative justice as truth, it becomes resistance to retributive justice. Hence, I employ social constructionism as a tool to analyse and deconstruct retributive justice within the prison system.

5.3. Prison in the context of retributive justice

As a retributive justice paradigm, the prison forms part of the criminal justice system of every state and imprisonment is seen as a legal penalty within that system:

A state is an organization that has the monopoly of violence.

There are two major forms of this. One is against other states, which we call war. The other is organized violence against its citizens practiced by almost all states... There is the development of penal and legal institutions (Macfarlane, 2005: 72).

Prison is represented by the state as a place for keeping those who fail to keep to the value system put in place by the dominant people. The knowledge underpinning this construct is that society will be safer once the guilty suspects are locked up. Furthermore, the government believes that tougher prison sentences may act as a deterrent to other would-be offenders. Imprisonment is a form of punishment, an organised and legal violence by the state against its people.

The meaning of this legal penalty has been defined as retributive justice, a philosophy based on the biblical Law of Moses 'eye for an eye', which in the Yorùbá common saying means, *bádìyẹ bá dà mí lóògùn nùn, màá fọ léyìn*, that is, 'if a hen breaks a bottle of my medicine, I will also break her eggs'. What this means is that prison sentences are retaliatory measures meant to punish the mates. However, Bianchi (1996) argues that the original words of 'retaliation' or 'retribution' in the Bible are related to peace and the Old Testament does not say 'retaliate', but rather recommends peace through conflict resolution processes.

Hence, he suggests that “the legal system should be interpreted according to the two Hebrew concepts, ‘t’sedeka’ meaning to speak the truth, and ‘t’shuvah’ meaning to stop something if it is wrong, repair the damage, and take another approach” (Bianchi, 1996)³⁰. Nonetheless, the tendency of the justice system is not to repair the damage, but to equate different types of harms with prison sentences – long and short term, life sentences and capital punishment, otherwise known as the death penalty.

The life in the prison can be unbearable and can demoralise the inhabitants. The condition and environment in the prison place it within a retributive system. This measure aims at punishing the inhabitants and this is done by:

distributing individuals, fixing them in space, classifying them,
extracting from them the maximum in time and forces, training
their bodies, coding their continuous behaviour, maintaining them
in perfect visibility, forming around them an apparatus of observation,
registration and recording, constituting on them a body of knowledge
that is accumulated and centralised (Foucault, 1977:231).

It begins when mates enter the prison; they no longer have the right to choose how they want to live their lives. Instead, the justice system puts a system in place to police their behaviour. The prison has its own culture, and the mates have to learn the traditional content of this culture and assimilate its practices and values. They are obliged under the prison system to be what the institution and government want them to be. They learn the language of the

³⁰ Bianchi, H. (1996) ‘Biblical Vision of Justice Mennonite Central Committee, United States’. [Online] Available: <http://www.restorativejustice.org/articlesdb/articles/1609> Accessed: 17.07.09

institution; assign new meanings to conditions they have taken for granted. They acquaint themselves with the rules of the institution.

They take up new habits of daily life (eating, sleeping, etc). They accept inferior roles, dogmas or codes of the prison. Timetables are frequently referred to for the purposes of maintaining order, monitoring the mates and keeping records. Their daily activities are organised in a highly structured and predictable way. Thus, there is time to sleep and time to wake up from sleep, time to talk and not to talk, time to receive visitors and time not to receive visitors. The movements from dining hall back to the cell are regulated and closely monitored by the wardens.

Such aggravation enduring through a length of time can create a problem. A prison warden told me that the condition in the prison had caused some mates to end up in the psychiatric hospitals with various psychological and mental problems. I also saw a mate who was blind in Portsmouth. In my discussion with a warden in the prison, I was told that he became blind in the prison. The cause of this was not revealed to me because of the data protection acts, but I can only speculate that the conditions in the prison may have contributed to his blindness. This clearly shows how subjugated people are “pathologised, criminalised and ridiculed” (Boyce-Tillman, 2007:21). This added punishment grounds prison firmly within a retributive justice paradigm.

Understanding this, Foucault advises that; “the punishing power should not soil its hands with a crime greater than the one it wished to punish” (Foucault, 1977:56). This may be too late for the mate who lost his sight in the prison. Undoubtedly, the punishing power had added to

his problem. Nonetheless, the government believes that locking people up in prison for various offences is the best way to control crime in society:

So the British prison population inexorably creeps upwards
and the profits of the increasingly privatized prison service grow.
The reputation of politicians who are 'tough on crime' is enhanced....
The state tends to become a prison machine. It can easily become
a surveillance state, its public places filled with closed-circuit
cameras, its wealthy private citizens living in guarded and walled
estates, its police heavily armed. To fight violence, violence of a
slightly different kind is used...So we end up with the grim fact that
like all species on earth, humans are necessarily violent
(Macfarlane, 2005: 72-73).

Overpopulation is one of Britain's most pressing problems within the prison system. Not only does it cost the tax payers a lot, it has also led to prison riots in the past. Although Lord Carter's prison review in 2003 reported that the increased use of imprisonment reduced crime in the short term, it also concluded that, "there is no convincing evidence that further increases in the use of custody would significantly reduce crime" (Lord Carter Review Report of 2003)³¹. It would appear that retributive justice only escalates the cycle of violence in society with a high level of reoffending amongst the mates. This questions imprisonment within the justice system and also marks the beginning of a counter-discourse to prison as retributive justice.

³¹ Lord Patrick Carter (2003) 'Managing offenders, reducing crimes: a new approach'. [Online] Available: <http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/files/pdf/52pp.pdf> Accessed: 16.04. 07

Foucault (1977) thinks prison should be a place for transformation, rehabilitation and restoration. Hence, many scholars vehemently oppose retributive justice; restorative justice becomes a new discourse about prison. This is the new knowledge that provides a new route to resist the old one. Thus, restorative justice is a form of counter-discourse to retributive justice.

5.4. Prison in the context of restorative justice

Restorative justice has become a popular correctional paradigm that is drawing support worldwide. It is a counter-discourse to the discourse of retributive justice. Hence, restorative justice “advocates restitution to the victim by the offender rather than retribution by the state against the offender” (Hutchison, & Wray, 1999:1). Rather than locking people up in the prison as a form of state punishment, restorative justice advocates reconciliation between the mates and victims. It sees crime as against individuals and/or communities and not the state.

Therefore, restorative justice is “concerned centrally with ‘restoration’: restoration of the victim, restoration of the offender to a law abiding life, restoration of the damage caused by crime to the community” (Marshall, 2003:30). Generally, restorative justice focuses on how to restore the lives of the mates, who are in confinement and also the victims, who have been affected as a result of crime. Hence, restorative justice engages the victims, mates and their affected communities in search of satisfactory solutions to facilitate reconciliation and the rebuilding of their lives and community. Below are some of the approaches to restorative justice.

5.4.1. Reconciliation as an approach to restorative justice

Reconciliation is one of the approaches to restorative justice. It engages all stakeholders, bringing the victims and mates together with the mediators who help them to express and acknowledge the wrongs and decide what might be done to put things right. South Africa has been a leading nation in this approach. Shortly after the end of apartheid, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up under the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No. 34 of 1995 in South Africa.³² This Commission, chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, initiated many mediation projects and tried to amend the relationship between the victims and perpetrators of the system.

The principles underpinning so-called restorative justice are that victims of the crimes can meet the mates and talk about the impact of the crime upon their lives and receive answers to any lingering questions about the incident. The mates are also given the opportunity to make things right by telling their story. So both the victim and the perpetrator of a crime are able to put their versions of the same story forward – the different representations of their own truth.

In Belgium, according to Biermans (2002), restorative justice consultants were recruited for every prison to organise, raise awareness, make contacts with internal and external services, take initiatives regarding staff, detainees and victim, and try to involve a wider range of society. It is observed that; “various victim-offender reconciliation programs are reporting positive effects on the mental state of the victims and a decrease in recidivism in the offenders” (Bloom, 1999:259).

³² Information about the Act is available online: http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/legal/b48b_98.htm Accessed: 18.2.07

Restorative justice also “concentrates on reforming an individual whose presence is considered both a danger and a disease with the social body” (Thompson, 1998:37) – that is people who are locked up in prison. There have been a number of initiatives on how their lives can be restored back to normal. Education and creative activities are some of the approaches to this.

5.4.2. Education as an approach to restorative justice

In England and Wales, the Government initiated an education policy within the prison system, so that mates can leave prison with qualifications and skills. It is estimated that more than half of male and 72% of female mates had no qualification at all when sentenced and more than two-thirds were not in training or employment at the time of offending. According to the statistics, 30% of mates were regular school truants and 49% were excluded from education at the time of offending. Hence, the Government has pledged to reduce re-conviction rates by 10% by 2010 through the education and skills policy in England and Wales. The belief is that if the mates had had qualifications, they would not have ended up in prison.

The Government’s 2005 paper, ‘Reducing Reoffending Through Skills and Employment: Next Steps’³³, stressed the importance of education to tackle the cycle of deprivation and crime. It is estimated, for example, that basic skills learning alone can contribute to a reduction in re-offending of 12%. Significantly, the prison service met its education targets in 2006, with mates achieving 46,000 work skills awards and 15,000 basic skills awards. This empowering initiative seems to be working according to the government.³⁴ Another initiative

³³ HM Government (2005) ‘Reducing Reoffending Through Skills and Employment: Next Steps’. [Online] Available: http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/migratedd/publications/g/green_paper_reducing_re-offending_through_skills_%20and_employment_final_version.pdf Accessed: 22.04. 07

³⁴ This information is available on www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk

in the area of restorative justice, which is peculiar to this case study, is the use of creative arts through active participation.

5.4.3. Creative arts as holistic approaches to restorative justice

A holistic approach using the creative arts is another means by which the mates can be restored back into society. It has been suggested that “we are morally and emotionally enfeebled if we live our lives without artistic nourishment” (Tippett, 1980:27). This is also my view and that of the British Government. Arts can bring a change in individual lives through direct experience. Within the justice system, The Community Sentences Committee has suggested that “the arts can play a directly functional role in the primary task of reducing offending, through education and challenging behaviour, offering new ways of thinking, and redirecting energies” (Community Sentences Committee in Balfour, 2003:1). This has prompted a number of initiatives.

In the UK, ‘The Unit for Arts and Offenders’ (UAOP)³⁵ within the Home Office is the organisation overseeing the arts in the criminal justice system. The Directory of Arts Activities in Prison 2003 lists 76 individual artists and organisations involved in 650 arts projects in UK prisons during 2002. While some (such as Geese Theatre, the TIPP Centre) have chosen to work in partnership with the criminal justice system, others (such as Clean Break Theatre Company) prefer to work independently and autonomously. However, all reported progress in the development of creativity, self-expression and skills in the art forms, self-esteem and self confidence.

³⁵ The information about UAOP can be found on <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/arts-and-offenders.pdf?version=1> Accessed. 28.04.08

Music is one of the creative arts that have been employed as a means of restoring and rehabilitating the mates. DeNora suggests that music can be employed as a “means of organising potentially disparate individuals such that their actions may appear to be intersubjective, mutual oriented, co-ordinated, entrained and aligned” (DeNora, 2000:109). In other words, music can be conceived as a device for establishing social order and a pathway into positive thinking. The importance of music has been noted and considered by many prisons in Britain.

For example, at HMP Pentonville, a singer and songwriter, Billy Bragg, initiated a project called “Jail Guitar Doors”, the aim of which is to raise money and provide musical instruments for the prisons³⁶. In November 2007, he delivered six guitars, a keyboard and drum kit to HMP Pentonville. For this reason, the former Prison Minister, David Hanson promised to “extend the [Billy Bragg] scheme outside of London and the South East to get it to the North West very shortly”.³⁷

Creative arts can be explored as a medium through which those whose condition society tries its best not to see, can begin to make themselves heard (Smith, 1997). By engaging in music making, it becomes a surrogate voice for the mates. This makes the *dùndún* an ideal instrument, being a talking drum. The *dùndún* can be the voice of the mates and it can act on their behalf. This is what happened in HMP Kingston, Portsmouth amongst the mates.

Reflecting on Foucault’s idea of resistance to power through new knowledge, I look at all these initiatives as a set of strategies of resistance against retributive justice within the prison

³⁶ More information on ‘Jail Guitar Doors’ project is available online at <http://www.jailguitardoors.org.uk/>
Accessed: 23.4.08

³⁷ Prison Service News ‘Music makes a difference’. [Online] Available:
<http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/prisoninformation/prison servicemagazine/index.asp?id=7715,18,3,18,0,0>
Accessed: 22.06.07

system. Restorative justice resists the power that sent people to prison, and also tries to restore power to the people who are sent to prison. The power to the mates here is not represented as an aggressive paradigm; and it does not mean that mates will be set free without completing their terms. Rather, it is a way of giving the mates control over their lives both within and outside the prison community.

Within the education initiative, their power is embedded in their ability to gain qualifications. Once they gain the qualification, they can have more control over their lives after leaving prison. Knowledge is vital to their acquisition of power. It is not the government that gives them power, because the government constructs prison within the retributive system. It is upon receiving certain skills within a restorative justice paradigm that the mates can potentially have better lives after their prison terms. This means that it is the knowledge they gain that gives them power. We can see that there is a relationship between knowledge and power.

The ultimate power within the concept of restorative justice is to enable the mates to find a place in wider society again. Whilst education and qualifications can give mates the skills, knowledge and power to succeed in their future professions, the arts can empower them psychologically while they are within the prison system. This addresses the emotional problems of the mates. Hence, the ultimate aim of the *dùndún* drumming workshops was to empower them psychologically. The following section discusses how drumming workshops were regarded as empowering activities.

5.5. Drumming as an empowering activity

The verb empower can be defined as to give someone the confidence, skills, freedom, etc. to do something. Thus motivation is the word that best captures the concept of empowerment in Portsmouth, and the task is very important in this construct. By task, I mean a set of activities that are directed towards a specific purpose and a task includes activities and a purpose. The activity is the “agent of transformation” (Boon and Plastow, 2004:11).

In HMP Kingston in Portsmouth, the activity was planned around the *dùndún* drumming workshops, during which mates were encouraged to channel their energy into something useful and creative. Hence, power is central to the concept of empowerment in this chapter. One of the facets of power is control: “perceived control over one’s environment and others is considered one of the primary psychological states underlying the experience of empowerment” (Menon, 1999:161). Control in this chapter relates to environmental control, emotional control and psychological control.

Environmental control is the ability to meet situational demands. It is my belief that individuals’ power needs are met when they perceive that they have power or when they believe they can adequately cope with events, situations, and/or the people they meet, but not in a confrontational manner. On the other hand, individuals’ power needs are frustrated when they are unable to cope with physical and social demands of their environment. Therefore, one of the ways to empower the mates is to give them the support that can make them survive and cope with the conditions in the prison environment.

In terms of emotional control, this is the ability to manage one’s feelings. We all have energy, which produces emotions. How we react to situations in life will partly depend on how we

control our emotions. I do not think that there is positive and negative energy; where the attention goes, energy flows. The same energy that produces negative emotions can produce positive ones when we direct it towards more productive activity. The *dùndún* workshops were intended to help the mates control their emotions. If the mates are able to channel their energy towards creative activities such as drumming and it yields a positive result, it can bring forth feelings of contentment in them.

Psychological empowerment will be discussed separately; however, in terms of psychological control this is conceptualised around positive thoughts towards oneself. The condition in the prison can have a bad psychological effect on the mates, which can prevent them from seeing good things in their lives. If the mates can play the *dùndún*, the feelings of contentment can change their thoughts about their identity. They can begin to see themselves not as mates, but as performers. Furthermore, the drumming activity can change the depressing environment to a livelier one, and this can have a positive psychological effect on the mates. This can be the beginning of the process of transformation and rehabilitation.

Another facet of power is energy, and to empower in this way is to raise energy within someone, the ‘I can do’ spirit, which is defined as “the ability to influence” (Thompson, 1998:134). There are many instances of the energising power of goals in connection with struggles, war and even career. For example, the inspirational influence of Nelson Mandela during apartheid in South Africa energised the Black South Africans towards their quest for political freedom. In Portsmouth, my drumming skills were able to energise the mates. They described how they played the *dùndún* and felt energised during the workshops. This was also because I was able to establish friendly relationships with the mates – a relationship of mutuality rather than of hierarchical power. The establishment of such relationships required

a change in the attitudes and belief of the mates about themselves in line with my mission and the objectives of the workshops.

Hence, empowerment in this chapter has been conceptualised in terms of what results after engaging in a set of tasks that produce cognitive variables, which have an effect on motivation in people and who become empowered. By cognitive variables I mean thinking or conscious mental processes that can lead to changes in cognitive behaviour. Thus the concept of empowerment here is a motivational one, which is significant in the psychological literature. In psychology, power and control are used as motivational belief states that are internal to individuals.

The other facet of power in this chapter is authority. In a legal sense, power means authority. Hence, empowerment can mean gaining/taking authority. A *dùndún* practitioner in the performance context has authority, which then overcomes the social stigma attached to the drumming profession as begging in the Yorùbá culture. The *dùndún* drum can override the status of the mates during the workshops and become the talking drummers or Àyàns. The *dùndún* drum can give authority to the mates and they can start to control everybody in the performance including the wardens during the workshops.

The idea is that the workshops will enable mates to control their personal space better and give them opportunity to do things in their own way. It is upon this paradigm that all the *dùndún* drumming workshops were constructed in HMP Kingston, Portsmouth. The good thing in this kind of empowerment is that everybody in the performance space can benefit from it. The wardens can feel entertained and they can have confidence in the mates and also feel de-stressed and relaxed for that moment.

5.6. Drumming workshops in HMP Kingston, Portsmouth

Her Majesty's Prison Kingston (its official name) in Portsmouth was originally built in 1877 and is one of the 80 prisons, which holds lifers³⁸ with an operational capacity of 199 as of 30th September 2007. According to the information on their website, Kingston originally accommodated domestic 'lifers', but recently there has been a change of emphasis and today the population is now in a more general Category 'B' 'lifer' population, including a wing for Category 'C' 'lifers' which can hold 24 'lifers'. Category 'B' is for *prisoners* for whom escape must be made very difficult. Category 'C' applies to *prisoners* who cannot be trusted in open conditions³⁹.

These categories are for male mates who have been convicted of murder, manslaughter, attempted murder, rape, buggery, armed robbery or arson⁴⁰. The term 'lifer' can be complicated as there are different terminologies surrounding the usage. According to the information on HMP website, except those who are convicted of some dreadful crimes and therefore stay in prison for the whole of their lives, a 'lifer' is expected to leave the prison at some point irrespective of the category. Based on this, I came up with the idea of restoration and rehabilitation of the mates through drumming and this led to a number of workshops.

5.6.1. The drumming workshop: 2nd October 2006

My first visit to Kingston was on 2nd October 2006, when the 'Drum4Fun' organisation hired me to facilitate a drumming workshop to celebrate the 'Black History Month'. The event was meant to create awareness of this historical day amongst the black mates and also to celebrate

³⁸ This is the term used by the prison authority on their website and also by the officials at Portsmouth.

³⁹ This information is available on Criminal Justice System website:

<http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/offender/walkthrough/questions/> Accessed: 15.03.09

⁴⁰ Information is available on HM Prison Services website:

<http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/prisoninformation/locateaprisons/prison.asp?id=464,15,2,15,464,0>
Accessed: 15.03.09

diversity amongst the mates in general. As part of my planning cycle, I requested some factual information to give me an overview of the prison – prison category, number of mates to expect, their nationalities, etc. This helped me decide on the number of drums to be taken with me to the prison. A useful warm-up exercise was part of the action that I planned for the workshop. However, the category of the prison made the level of security higher than I had anticipated. The following opinions expressed in italics are taken from my personal journal.

We arrived at this gigantic building; the gate was about ten feet tall. I wondered whether it was ever locked. The building was on a busy road and its main gate and door were adjacent to this road. The fortifications of the prison were massive and impenetrable. There were surveillance cameras everywhere. It was different from the Nigerian prisons; it was neat. As we entered the building, I saw a gate leading to parking spaces on our right side with a long iron road painted in red and white, but there was no keeper, which made me think that it was being operated electronically.

There was silence everywhere; I first thought no one was there. Suddenly, a voice came from nowhere telling us to drive the van through the main entrance door. I asked the other person in the van, 'where is the voice coming from', 'they knew we were here, we were already being monitored since we arrived' she replied. She knew how the prison system works in Britain. I tried to compose myself. We drove through the tall main entrance; there a thorough checking was carried out. They asked us to hand over everything we had and ordered us to leave the van; we simply succumbed to the order. I have never experienced this in my life. I had done a drumming workshop in a Hungarian prison before in Budapest; the level of security was not as high as this.

There were some tense moments in this period of checking, everything I had planned for the workshop completely disappeared including the rhythms and order the workshop would follow. They checked everywhere in the van using a handheld device; they used the same to check our bodies. A security guard took pains to check the òyáàlu dùndún; I wondered what he was looking for. He spent little time in checking the other thirty djembes. I had thought that the dùndún fascinated him more than the djembe, but I was wrong as his next action proved. He lifted it up and put it close to his ear as he shook it; he wanted to know if something was concealed in it. The reason was very simple; the djembe is an upright drum covered with a skin on one side and open on the other end. However, the òyáàlu dùndún is sealed on both sides.

I will now reflect on my experience at the gate. I went to Portsmouth with huge enthusiasm, but my spirit was dampened at the gate because of the institutional culture of the prison. In every society, thorough checking is part of the prison culture; “it cannot be interrupted, except when its task is totally completed; its action on the individual must be uninterrupted” (Foucault, 1977:136).

What I observed in Portsmouth was that prison culture was a source of empowerment for the wardens. The role of the wardens as the custodians of the prison culture gave them power to search the drums and also to order us to leave all our valuable possessions behind at the gate. The wardens carried the insignia of the prison culture in that moment and as a result, we had to obey them. We can also read the meaning of their action as territorial empowerment. Although we were invited into the prison, we did not work or live in it. Hence, they were endowed with territorial empowerment, which made them have power over anyone who entered into their territory, irrespective of their motives and intention.

We finally got to the prison chapel where the workshop was to take place and one by one the mates started arriving. As I had anticipated, there were a number of black mates from Nigeria, Tanzania, Morocco and Kenya and some Asians. However, they were outnumbered by non-black mates. This categorisation is based on their racial identity; they could all be British nationals. This multicultural setting provided an opportunity for cultural dialogue, understanding and integration.

It would appear that one of the probable reasons for less cultural understanding in the prison in the past is that mates were not culturally integrated. Some mates that I spoke with also supported this view. They said that opportunity for any dialogue was limited to dining hall, gym, and/or chapel. They were usually under close surveillance, which often made many conceal their true identity. Nonetheless, whenever the opportunity for dialogue surfaced, the mates usually embraced it. A good example of this forum was the 'Black History Month' event which provided an opportunity for cultural integration with the black and non-black mates sitting together and sharing in the experience the event provided.

I introduced myself and asked them to see and take me as their friend, and they all smiled. They also introduced themselves; two were Yorùbá and another two were Igbo, another big ethnic group in Nigeria. We started with an exercise, which I have explored several times with people, that is facilitating rhythms, tempo and musical timing through clapping and the use of other body parts. This concentration exercise is also good as a stimulus for workshop and discussion. It usually starts from the slowest and easiest pace. Once it gets faster people often get lost on the way; and whoever makes a mistake will be asked to stop and keep their eyes on others; in this way we can have a winner for the exercise.

The exercise took the same routine in Portsmouth. The mates were very tense as they tried to get everything right. The process of engaging with the exercise “involved the whole - body, intellect, mind, etc” (Floyd, 2008:87). This was because of the significance of the practice to them. The mates knew that the opportunity could only come once in a while, hence they embraced it. The forum allowed for true expression and because the moment mattered to them, they engaged with the process authentically (I will discuss this later).

One warden said that such uninhibited displays of happiness and enthusiasm were very rare amongst the mates. They were not checked by the wardens. I did not interrupt them. Rather I allowed them to be who they wanted to be. They took control of the space. The nature of the exercise made us become friends easily and they spoke freely with me. As the game progressed, one by one, they all dropped until the last mate who was able to keep the rhythms and held his nerve. I rounded the game up, acknowledged their efforts and thanked them for their cooperation.

The method that I employed here seems to parallel Mary Priestley’s approach called “analytical music therapy”, which she describes as “another kind of love, a listening love, a reasoning love, a maternal Yin kind of love that is a giving of permission to be” (Priestley, 1994:123). By giving the mates unconditional and non-judgemental support, by accepting them the way they were and also by integrating and recontextualising myself into their world, they expressed themselves and related with me freely. This was what I was looking for.

We used *djembe* drums for the actual workshop, but the *dùndún* caught their attention more than the *djembe* because many of them had not seen it before. This prompted cultural dialogue between them and me. Whilst talking about the *dùndún* drumming tradition, I asked

them to pass it round so that they could all feel and touch it. This was particularly good because of Tim, who was blind. Of course, the two Yorùbá mates were already familiar with the drum and they reconnected with it immediately.

They did this by interrupting me whilst I was talking about the *dùndún*. Though they could not play the *dùndún*, its presence gave them their cultural voice. They saw for the first time in years a drum that was emblematic of their musical culture and identity and they felt empowered culturally. I gained my empowerment from their enthusiasm towards the *dùndún* drums. After the workshops, I reflected on the interest that the *dùndún* generated and I concluded that it would be a great opportunity for me to organise a series of workshops for my research using the *dùndún* set of drums. I revisited my spiral model in Chapter Three as I prepared for my first *dùndún* workshop in a prison. This took place on 14th June 2007 and it was well attended.

5.6.2. The *dùndún* drumming workshop: 14th June 2007

This workshop did not involve the ‘Drum4Fun’ organisation that hired me for the previous workshop in the prison. This gave me the opportunity to do things my own way. As part of the planning cycle, I had made contact with the prison chaplain, who offered to be my gatekeeper in the prison. He organised the workshops for me and these were scheduled for 14th, 28th June and 5th July 2007, from 2:00 pm – 4:15 pm. Thursdays seemed to be the perfect day for extracurricular activities in the prison. This is part of the prison culture that I discussed earlier. Almost the same set of people attended the three workshops. I was able to evaluate their well being this time. However, none of those who attended the ‘Black History Month’ event came. This was because of the mobility policy in the prison system. They had been transferred to another prison for various reasons.

I had received all the necessary permission and paperwork to facilitate my workshops. I went with a complete set of the *ìyáàlu dùndún* sub-family ensemble drums and a number of the *gáangan* drums, and not a single *djembe*. Attendance at the workshops was voluntary. Those who attended had already signed the consent forms, and agreed to be interviewed during and/or after the workshops. The workshops attracted a number of mates.

Shaun identified himself as ‘African Portuguese and a son of an African slave’. He was seventy five years old and born in Liverpool. He told me the story of how his great grandparents were taken as slaves from Africa to Portugal and finally landed in Britain. The understanding of himself made him study the 18th century history of the slave trade and psychology of music (music of Africa) at the university. According to him, he used to be a lecturer in one of the leading universities in London. This clearly shows that not all mates are uneducated. His contribution to the group discussion was very useful. Another British mate took a more or less passive role at the beginning, but became active later. He was a guitarist. The mates identified themselves as Dominican (not Republic), South African, Jamaican and British. One particular mate identified himself as African British but with Portuguese and Irish origin. This shows how complex the identities of the mates were.

The session began with a controversial debate about nationality and cultural identity, which I triggered unintentionally during the introduction. I asked where they came from. Since the majority of them were black, I asked for their nationalities as I was keen to find out if there were Nigerians or indeed Yorùbá amongst them. However, because of the history of slavery and colonialism, many black people take the issue of identity seriously. In my experience, many black people see the question as an attempt to single them out. It was for this reason that my intention was misinterpreted by the mates. Many Black British do not want to be

judged on their racial identity, but on their national identity. The mates identified themselves as British. Nonetheless, they still retained their African cultural heritage.

The workshop and interview took the form of a forum with intermittent drumming. The mates joined in as they came one by one. I talked to them about the *dùndún* generally and the playing techniques for the two leading drums, the *gáangan* and *ìyáàlu*, but the notion of a talking drum generated another long debate. This led to cultural understanding about the concept of a talking drum in the *dùndún* drumming tradition.

For Tim, who was born in Dominica, the notion of a “talking drum is how someone expresses himself through music”. His meaning found a place in one of the domains in the model on construction of meaning which I talked about in Chapter One – that is ‘expression’. He interpreted the meaning around the way someone expresses himself whilst playing a drum - the expressiveness of the drummer. This can be shown through the emotional feelings of the drummer and the physical movement of his body. He did not interpret the meaning of a talking drum around other domains in the model such as values, materials, space and construction. In his understanding, any drum could be a talking drum. Therefore, his interpretation was not based on the construction of sentences with the drum itself.

This means that there is no need to construct a drum specially for talking since every drummer can show emotion. This also means that we do not necessarily need to understand a piece of music based on sentence construction, and one is not obliged to find lexical meaning in every piece of music. It is the expressiveness of the drummer that conveys the meaning. What if the drummer does not show any emotion because some Yorùbá *dùndún* practitioners can do that? This made me seize the opportunity to tell him the meaning of a talking drum in

the context of the *dùndún* drumming tradition. So, I gave him a *gáangan* drum to touch and feel. I later asked him to give it a go. He recognised that the tones of the drum changed when he played and pressed the strings of the drum under his armpit. This was the changing moment in his musical experience. He raised many questions which I answered as best I could.

Another mate, Liam, thought he might have seen a talking drum before. He said he had definitely seen a lot of Sikh people⁴¹ using the talking drum sticks before during a television programme. I instantly reflected on the Indian talking drum that I saw at Fairfield Primary School in Basingstoke, where I had a number of drumming workshops and performances with the pupils. The school had two Indian talking drums with thick skins on both sides. The Indian drumming sticks had the same shape as the *dùndún* drumming sticks, but they were thicker.

Shaun's response to Liam's observation was explicit; 'Africans went to India in those days, so talking drums might have gone with them'. He went on to say that European musical culture came out of Africa. When I asked him what he meant by this, he went on to say that emotion in music travelled to America and the New World through the African slave descendants in the form of soul music; music from the heart. His contribution to the debate was more academic and his attitude was also anti-colonial. He did not play his emotion through drumming as he did not play at all. He managed to express himself because the forum provided him with an ideal opportunity for that.

⁴¹ A member of the religion which developed in 15th century and is based on the belief in a single god and on the teaching of Guru Nanak. India has the largest number of Sikhism.

The South African mate, Ben, showed a higher level of enthusiasm about drumming than others. He said he was a traditional drummer back home in his village. Like Tim, his understanding of a talking drum was not based on the lexical structure or sentence construction. He interpreted the meaning of a talking drum based on his musical culture and experience as a drummer. For him, every drum can talk and he explained how; “when there is no rain in the village the priest will perform some ritual and we will play the drums and the rain will come. We use the drum to send a message to the god of rain to release it for the people”⁴².

What Ben said here may not be understood from the western point of view and such ideas might be questioned by theorists. His meaning was interpreted around the value of the music, a domain in the model on construction of meaning in Chapter One. In order to appreciate and understand the meaning of such music, it is important to understand the underlying values of the culture of the people and the drum. Ben was talking about ritual drums, which could be likened to the Yorùbá ritual drums which I discussed in Chapter Two. These drums were usually constructed specially because of their specific role in the community. They were communication devices. The music played on them served as a medium through which gods and ancestors could be reached. Whenever the priests played the drums at the shrines of the gods, the sound travelled through the liminal space and established a spiritual contact with the gods who then released rain to their people. It was upon these parameters that Ben constructed his own meaning of a talking drum. All the meanings by the mates sat perfectly within the five domains in the model in Chapter One- that is ‘space’, ‘values’, ‘construction’, ‘material’ and ‘expression’.

⁴² During a group discussion at the HMP in Portsmouth.

Ben further interpreted the meaning of a talking drum based on his understanding of the theory of call and response, which I discussed in Chapter Two. He said that the way the drums talk to each other is that each drummer plays a different rhythm/s at a different time during a performance, which makes them engage in conversation. This is a communication theory known as call and response. In Yorùbá and many other African cultures music builds upon various rhythms, which are interlocked. What this means is that every drummer plays a pattern of rhythm, therefore creating a polyrhythm within an ensemble. In practice, these rhythms, when we look at them very closely, are responding to each other. Hence, every rhythm is either a call or a response; thus it becomes a conversation.

Whilst the discussion was going on, Charlie, a young black man from Jamaica, came in. He was probably the youngest of them all, probably in his twenties. After the discussion that lasted almost an hour, they asked me to demonstrate how to play the *dùndún*. I played a rhythm that came to my mind at that time while they watched me. I later asked for volunteers first before playing together as a group. Charlie was the first to volunteer. There was absolute quietness in the chapel as everybody was very curious about what he was going to play. Suddenly, I noticed that his face changed as he struck the drum six times to show the number of syllables in the phrase that he played.

This prompted me to ask what he thought he had played. I was sure that the phrase was the reason for the change on his face. He simply replied “nothing”. However, in order to convince him to tell us the phrase, I told him that I just wanted to be sure that he had played the phrase correctly. Actually, I was interested in the reason for the change on his face. After mounting pressure on him, Charlie told me that he had played; “songs of freedom I cry”. When I heard this I gazed at him in mute admiration. The phrase spoke volumes. It reflected

Charlie's aspirations and that of other mates in the prison. Now that I realised why his face changed, I felt bad. However, I kept it to myself because I did not want to dampen his spirits even more. At that moment, I regretted that I asked him to tell us the phrase he had played on the drum. Nonetheless, he made his voice heard, but not to the prison authority.

Furthermore, although he did not play the phrase in a way that could make people understand what he had played, I did not pass any judgement. My goal was not centred on his ability and that of others to employ the *dùndún* to talk or to make them keep the *dùndún* drumming traditions, but to make them have authority over the drums and themselves. By this I mean the ability to be who they wanted to be without being controlled by anyone around them including me. This parallels Martin Heidegger's definition of authentic.

The German word (*eigentlich*) translated as 'authentic' in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962) comes from a word meaning 'own' (*eigen*) and carries with it a connotation of owning oneself, owning to what someone is becoming, and taking responsibility for being one's own. As Heidegger sees it, to become who you are is to identify what really matters in the historical situation in which you find yourself and take a resolute stand on pursuing those ends. This happened to Charlie in two ways.

Firstly, despite the fact that Charlie struck the drum correctly according to the number of syllables in the phrase, he did not play the phrase correctly because the tones were different from the actual tones of the song when he sang the song. Nonetheless, he was himself. He was not intimidated by his lack of ability to use the drum to speak correctly. He played it as Charlie and not as me or as a *dùndún* practitioner in Nigeria. Authenticity was in him being able to be Charlie and not pretending to be someone else. For a young *dùndún* trainee in

Nigeria, the emphasis would have been to play the drum to convey a clear understanding of the phrase. However, for him the emphasis was not to play the drum to produce correct tones in the phrase, but on the number of syllables in the phrase, which he did correctly.

Nonetheless, what Charlie did to make himself understood instead was that he played his emotion straight away. He did not hide his feelings. Through his facial expression, his emotion conveyed the clear texts and interpretation of the phrase he played. It was this emotion that gave me the impression of what I thought he had played and which consequently prompted my question. This is the second model that I discussed in Chapter Two when I talked about the technique that one could employ when trying to make the *dùndún* speak a non-tonal language such as English. This is when a drummer emphasises his emotion in order to convey his intended message, instead of playing the phrases in a way to facilitate clear understanding of the message. This is usually done by someone who is not a professional *dùndún* practitioner.

Secondly, what mattered to Charlie was not the ability to play the drum as I would have played it. He did not want to be a professional *dùndún* practitioner. There was only one thing in his mind, freedom. He identified this message as a significant thing that he wanted to pass across to his fellow mates or the prison authority. The *dùndún* only helped him to find his voice.

We turned the song and the rhythm to a call and response activity. I played the song on the *ìyáàlù dùndún* many times and they responded each time by singing the song. Now that they knew the song, they could identify if I played the tones correctly or not. I later gave

everybody a drum each and asked them to play the response in any way they could, after I had played the call.

However, despite this, they still kept trying to play the phrase correctly. Since that was what they wanted to do, I just left them alone as I observed them. This sparked a noisy situation in the chapel as they engaged in an activity that produced a lot of excitement; they all felt empowered. The same phrase that produced sad emotion for Charlie later produced enthusiastic emotion for him and everybody. Those who thought they had got the phrase correctly were showing others how to play it. They became the masters to others who were still learning to play the phrase.

Actually, none of them played the phrase correctly, but I was also careful not to be judgemental. I did not present myself as a master, but a facilitator. This is one of the concepts of empowerment that I discussed earlier. They were in control of everything. This gave them the confidence to express themselves freely and without being shy or worried about their mistakes. What really surprised me most was the rowdiness in the chapel. Despite this, they were not cautioned as the wardens were just going about doing other things. They had taken the day as the mates' day. This was exactly the kind of empowerment that I had envisaged.

On another day, the wardens might have seen Charlie's song as an act of rebellion. However, it was not Charlie's intention to cause a riot with the song. Nonetheless, if he had intended to cause a riot, he would probably have got away with it because of the context in which the workshop was placed.

As I have discussed in Chapter Two, a *dùndún* practitioner can employ the drum to raise an issue of pressing concern or even pass a negative remark about the client who dances and sprays him with money. However, because the situation is usually celebratory, the client will not have any reason to suspect that he is being insulted. If Charlie's intention had been to cause a problem, the wardens would not have suspected because of the enthusiastic mood of everybody in the chapel.

Another concept within empowerment, which I discussed earlier, is authority. There seemed to be a shift of power between the wardens and mates. The *dùndún* that Charlie was carrying gave him power and authority over the prison wardens. Though the phrase that he played was symbolic, powerful and could easily spark a riot, the authority which the drum gave Charlie was higher than that of the prison warden at that moment. Therefore, as Charlie was in a position of authority, everything he did came with power. The rhythm that Charlie played came with authority, which eventually put the wardens under his control. The power shifted from the prison wardens to the mates.

Furthermore, what the wardens probably saw in Charlie was the image of Àyàn Àganlú, the Yorùbá god of drumming. Naturally, the *dùndún* adds to or changes the identity of the practitioners to his identity. Therefore, whoever plays the *dùndún* naturally becomes 'Àyàn', irrespective of whether he was born in a drumming family or not because Àyàn is a name as well as a title. As discussed in Chapter Two, drumming is seen as an act of begging in the Yorùbá social culture. However, the *dùndún* practitioners during the performance are usually seen as sacred and not beggars because the drum (Àyàn Àganlú) they carry changes their identity. Perhaps it was in the same way that Charlie was seen during the workshop – not as an 'inmate', but as a *dùndún* practitioner. We can say that the sacredness in the drum had

changed Charlie's identity. This was the natural grace that he enjoyed, which was similar to the practitioners at home. It was on this parameter that he was able to do or say what he wanted within the context of the workshops.

In the *dùndún* drumming tradition, the practitioners can speak their minds through the drum without any prosecution, because they assume the office of the god of drumming. A *dùndún* drummer has a freedom of speech, which is considerably wider in the context of a performance than he would normally enjoy when using the natural medium of speech outside the performance context. Charlie and other mates were protected by this rule. They were able to utter their feelings, which ordinarily they would not have been able to say.

Dennis: 'C', can I ask you something, why did you choose that song, why not another one?

Charlie: That is what comes to my mind straight.

Dennis: Apologies for saying this. Is it because you are here?

Charlie: Yes, it is everybody's dream here to be free one day, but I don't know, I don't know when that can happen. I think too much.

Dennis: Do you often sing the song in your cell?

Charlie: No, I only sing it in my mind. You can't sing that kind of a song here.

Dennis: So, you use the drum to say what is in your mind.

Charlie: Yes, it is another way of expressing my feelings and thought.

Charlie spoke from his heart as he tried to cope with the condition in the prison. As a young and exuberant man, he thought too much about his future, but he was not able to express himself because of the institutional culture of the prison. He and his fellow mates would have preferred a long term or everlasting freedom in which they would be able to live a normal life again. The conversation we had after the workshop mirrored the prison experience through a rich spectrum of expressive content. They showed signs of remorse as they reflected on the song and their condition in the prison.

Charlie seemed to have spoken the minds of other mates without previous arrangement. This is one of the roles of a *dùndún* drummer in the Yorùbá culture. A *dùndún* drummer is not only able to speak his own mind, he is also able to express the feelings and aspirations of his community and act as a spokesman for specific clients when occasions demand it. In the *dùndún* drumming tradition, the ability to think spontaneously and be creative is a prerequisite of a *dùndún* drummer. This is why the *dùndún* practitioners are sensitive to the people around them and the situational context of every event.

As a surrogate device, the *dùndún* has been employed in different ways for empowerment purposes. It is now a common practice for the Yorùbá politicians in Nigeria to go to election campaigns with a big *dùndún* ensemble. They borrowed this idea from the Yorùbá warriors who usually went to the battlefields with the *dùndún* ensembles in the past. On the one hand, they would sing the praises of the warrior, but on the other hand they would send provocative messages to others.

The *dùndún* in the context of war served two important functions – it empowered the warriors and mounted a psychological pressure on the enemy group. We can say that in the prison the

dùndún empowered the mates, but mounted psychological pressure on the prison wardens, which is why they could not stop them from doing what they wanted during the workshops. They saw and related to the mates during the workshops as talking drummers and not as mates.

Furthermore, the *dùndún* can be employed as a medium through which one can reject ill-treatment without being seen as a rebel. For instance, if a dominant culture imposes an inappropriate condition on someone, the *dùndún* can act on behalf of the oppressed. The workshops provided a forum for resisting the power that brought the mates into the prison. This can be likened to Foucault's idea of power resistance within social constructionism. As the workshops were construed within a restorative justice paradigm, the mates were able to resist the retributive system, but without causing any problem. This particular role of the *dùndún* as a talking instrument prompted another debate in a new direction and it was led by Shaun.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| <i>Shaun:</i> | <i>That is why talking drum was banned in slave plantations so they could not talk to each other across the fields.</i> |
| <i>Dennis:</i> | <i>Charlie, I saw your face when you played it, was it as a result of the song?</i> |
| <i>Charlie:</i> | <i>Yes, the song means a lot to me and I feel something special while playing it with the drum, it is not the same feeling when I sing it alone in my mind without a drum.</i> |

- Ben: There is something in drumming that makes someone feel somehow. For example, Dennis before you came I was here at 2 o' clock waiting for you, but you did not come, so I went back to my cell but asked the guard to let me know when you are here. Whilst I was in my cell I heard you playing the drum; the sound of the drum was a confirmation that you are here. It was as if the drum was calling me or telling me that I should be here and not in the cell. I could feel the vibration in my cell as I had goosebumps immediately because of excitement. I could feel the drums calling me, calling me but the guard was not around then and I had to press the bell continuously. These drums are like electricity.*
- Shaun: Aborigines can smell water. We can also feel drums in the same way. You don't lose touch with the drum in your culture. You keep in touch because it's the music we listen to. When you listen to soul and Cuban music there is something spiritual that comes from the music and it goes to your own spirit.*
- Dennis: Tell me more...*
- Shaun: What motivates me is outside of English culture. I could be the classical guitar player they demanded of me, but when I was on my own I reverted back to playing my music. I will be here next time you come.*
- Ben: These drums are just like going back home. Please come on time next week and bring other remaining drums of the family.*

As someone who had a firsthand experience of colonialism, Shaun's contribution to the debate was always about the reinstatement of his cultural identity. It seemed to me that the issue of cultural identity was one of the reasons why he ended up in the prison. This is reflected in his comment above; 'what motivates me is outside of English culture. I could be

the classical guitar player they demanded of me, but when I was on my own I reverted back to playing my music'. This particular statement showed that Shaun had been struggling in the prison with his cultural identity. I will discuss this more in this chapter.

Another interesting thing in the discussion above was Ben's interpretation of the *dùndún* rhythms. He understood the rhythms that I played on the *dùndún* as a form of energy that descended on him like a trance. He also likened this energy to electricity that powers the light. This experience seemed to parallel one of my concepts of empowerment that I discussed earlier in this chapter - energy. Metaphorically, the effect of this was the sweat on his body. He explained this in his own way; 'you can see the sweating – the sweating expresses more to you' (talking to me). What this meant was that certain power went with the rhythms, and as his spirit was already in tune with traditional music or rhythms due to his cultural upbringing, and this activated him more quickly. The sweat could be said to be the realisation of the activation of the power that went out with the rhythms to his body.

Throughout the workshops and group discussion, Ben seemed to be spiritually connected with his ancestors. He explained further; 'oh, this person is having high energy like in another world, that's why I bang the door'⁴³. In the prison culture, banging a door can be interpreted as bad behaviour. At that time, he was not the person doing it, but the power in the form of energy that went with what I played on the drum. However, it is possible that Ben's action had nothing to do with the presence of any spiritual power or energy in the drum (because the *dùndún* was not a ritual drum), but Ben was overrun by the excitement that the workshop was able to provide for him. Whatever was happening, Ben's action showed the extent of his

⁴³ In a discussion after the workshop

empowerment and the power that he had over the prison warden on that day. Hence, it was not seen as bad behaviour.

This spiritual interpretation of the power or energy that Ben talked about also led to a brief cultural dialogue amongst the mates. The other non-black mates also contributed to this cultural debate. Their experience about spiritual power in the cultural context was down to voodoo, which they had seen on television or read about in a book. The two mates from the Caribbean related their experiences to their culture. As part of my contribution to this debate, I told them about my Yorùbá experience, but made them understand that though the *dùndún* is attributed to Àyàn Aganlu, the Yorùbá god of drumming, the *dùndún* is not a spiritual drum. The way Ben related his experience and the seriousness he attached to it made me think that he was probably initiated into a particular religion back home in South Africa. However, I chose not to ask him. I simply did not want to bring out that debate.

The workshop for the day provided a forum for cultural dialogue and understanding. The mates found their empowerment in the drum, and they embraced it. However temporary it was, the *dùndún* gave power back to the mates. By employing the *dùndún* to speak on his behalf, Charlie especially felt relieved and content psychologically with what he had done. Though he would have preferred to have his freedom back, nonetheless, he still believed he had achieved something for speaking his mind in such a free environment. This was the view of Charlie during our discussion. They all said they had had a good time and looked forward to the next one on 18th of June 2007. These were some of the concepts of restorative justice that I discussed earlier.

5.6.3. The *dùndún* drumming workshop: 18th June 2007

The workshop on 18th June, 2007 followed a different routine. As an Action Research methodology, I revisited the spiral cycle in Chapter Three. I reflected on the previous workshop and re-planned this in the light of my observations. Thus, this workshop included re-planning, re-acting and re-observing. I observed that the mates did not spend much time on drumming during the previous workshop. This is because the workshop took the form of a forum discussion with intermittent drumming. As the ultimate goal of the project was to make the mates engage with the *dùndún*, I changed the direction of this workshop. Thus, it was a workshop, followed by a discussion.

We naturally started with our *anthem*, ‘songs of freedom I cry’. This song had clearly become the solidarity song amongst the mates. I have likened this song to Bob Marley’s song ‘The Song of Freedom’ played in the 1980s. Perhaps, Charlie got the inspiration from Bob Marley’s version of song of freedom because he was also Jamaican. Because of their emotion, mood and willingness to sing and play this song, I gave them the psychological support they needed and allowed them to satisfy their needs and wants.

The workshop was concise and snappy. I did not need to tell them the story of the *dùndún* again. Therefore, we spent a lot of time playing the drums. As promised, I went with all my *dùndún* drums, so everybody was able to have one. Liam who took a less active role in the last workshop showed more interest; he wanted to learn to play the *dùndún* seriously. He was already familiar with playing (jazz) drums. According to him, he wanted to learn how to improvise on the *dùndún* as he did on guitar. It is very interesting how he drew a parallel between the *dùndún* and jazz drums. As a result, he asked me to teach him a number of rhythms, which he could play.

However, I told him that he needed his own drum to be able to achieve this goal. He looked me in the eyes and probably thought I would just give him one, but I did not. This would mean giving everybody a drum each, which I could, but would mean losing all my drums. However, I thought that I would suggest that to the prison authority before I left for Winchester. One important thing on this day was that we learnt how to hold and position drums whilst performing. They now understood the techniques for playing the *gangan* and *iyáàlu dùndún*.

What really surprised me was that those who had the *gangan* drums were also interested in playing the *iyáàlu dùndún* even though they both have the same function as talking drums. For example, Ben preferred the *iyáàlu dùndún* to *gangan* because of its playing technique. As discussed in Chapter Two, the *gangan* uses an armpit technique and the *iyáàlu dùndún* uses shoulder technique. By suspending the *iyáàlu dùndún*'s strip on his shoulder, Ben felt he was in control of the drum.

There are many concepts of control, but Ben understood and interpreted control differently from the one I had imagined. The meaning of his control was that he was able to look at the face of the drum whilst playing, which is not usually done by the practitioners at home. Whilst looking at the face of the drum, he was concentrating on that too much, which affected how he played his phrase because his attention was divided into two. However, control in the *dùndún* drumming tradition is that a drummer is able to grab the strings with ease and manipulate the drum. In this way, he does not need to look at the drum before playing his phrases, he only concentrates and listens.

However, based on my experience, close observation of the *dùndún* practitioners at home and personal interpretation of these techniques, there are certain things/elements that I think are important both for the drummer and for producing good results. These elements form part of the concepts of control and they will be analysed using one of the concepts of this research, ‘construction of meanings’.

These elements are the position of hands and arms and general posture. The position of the hands and arms are very important for two different reasons. For example, the position of hand/arm whilst playing the *gáangan* has to be in a ‘V’ shape. Firstly, it makes the job of a drummer easier in this position. Secondly, it helps the drummer to produce the required phrases correctly. It is also possible to produce the required phrases without keeping this tradition. However, in my experience, the *dùndún* practitioners always emphasise the importance of the position of hands and arms and always insist that the trainee drummers keep this. More importantly, the position gives the drummer absolute control over the drum.

Posture can also be interpreted in another way. It can be termed as a sign of control and/or authority – the posture of a *dùndún* drummer helps define his authority over the performance space, drum, clients and event in general. The *dùndún* drummer’s posture can signify empowerment if we interpret empowerment as having authority. Furthermore, posture can also mean respect. Posture in this context means the way a *dùndún* drummer holds his shoulders, neck and back, and/or a particular position in which he stands or sits during a performance. It is this posture that establishes his authority, and it is this authority that leads to respect. For example, usually, an *ìyáàlu dùndún* drummer does not look at the face of the drum whilst playing. As this can mean that he is bowing down to the people who are supposed to respect him.

In the course of a performance, standing upright or sitting comfortably means respect and authority. This is in sharp contrast to the Yorùbá culture where standing upright and looking straight at an elder's face are seen as disrespectful behaviour. It is the *dùndún* that makes that behaviour not disrespectful for the drummers in the performance context. However, it is possible that some people might still see this as a disrespectful behaviour, particularly if the client is a king. More significantly, Yorùbá kings also understand that a *dùndún* drummer in the performance context is the 'master of ceremony'. Hence, the drummers are immune from any prosecution. However, a *dùndún* drummer can choose to respect people and bow to them, but this is not usually done whilst playing. Still on this issue of respect, looking at the face of a drum can be interpreted as the drummer not respecting the god of drumming, which the drum represents. Bowing for the gods is part of the Yorùbá culture and also a sign of respect for them.

Another important reason why looking at the face of the drum is not good or usually encouraged is that it can mean the drummer is not in control. This can mean that he does not have authority over the drum or the performance space. It can also mean that the drummer does not have the confidence and the skills to play the drum. My intention was not to control the mates by imposing any tradition on them. They might feel that they were not in control of the workshop or their environment, which is why I allowed them to play the drums in their own way.

Therefore, to make them feel they were in control, I had to close my eyes to some vital part of the *dùndún* drumming tradition that I grew up with. This allowed them to break with some of the norms associated with the *dùndún* drumming tradition. I did not see this as a problem. Moreover, taking the *dùndún* to the prison was already an act of breaking the tradition.

As I have said in Chapter One, the ultimate goal of the workshop was not to keep the tradition, but to make the mates use the *dùndún* to create a new musical culture and tradition. They were actively involved in the creation of culture and tradition during the workshops. They produced an outcome and a product that can be termed the *dùndún* drumming tradition of the mates within the prison context.

For example, Ben and Shaun preferred to leave their hands/arms free whilst playing the *gáangan* instead of creating a ‘V’ shape. This can mean that they were not in control of the drum, but actually this is the way they could feel they were in control of the drum; this was their authentic style. Surprisingly, I found it very difficult to keep with their unique style. This is because I was born into a different tradition. However, they were comfortable with what I was struggling with, and they struggled with what I was comfortable with.

The workshop went very smoothly and we learnt from each other. I wanted to leave them in high spirits. Therefore, before leaving on that day, we played ‘songs of freedom I cry’, which had become so special to them. They were filled with excitement as usual for playing their music. I think it is right to suggest that the song was also part of their empowerment not just the drums. However, the coming together of the *dùndún* drums and song and the activities involved in producing what I call prison music increased this level of empowerment. I thanked them for the day and promised to be with them on time for the last workshop on 5th July 2007.

5.6.4. The *dùndún* drumming workshop: 5th July 2007

I revisited the spiral model to help me plan this last workshop. It was the climax of the previous sessions. I started by thanking them for taking part in the workshop. They all

responded that they had really enjoyed the sessions. They asked me to come regularly, which I promised to do. For this day, I gave each person a drum. They recognised the one they played last time through the classification of gender amongst the drums.

Now that they could play different tones on the drum, I gave them two improvisational techniques. The first one is “grounding: [that is] creating a stable containing music that can act as an anchor to the [mates’] music” (Wigram, 2004:91). I created a simple rhythm to serve as an anchor, which we all played on our various drums. This was the grounding rhythm. By creating a grounding rhythm with the mates, each of them was able to add additional rhythms in the way they wanted. Even if their rhythms were not timed properly within the structure of the ongoing music, the grounding rhythm was able to stabilise the whole music.

The second one was “holding: [described as a way of] providing a music anchor and container for the [mates’] music making, using rhythmic or tonal grounding techniques” (Wigram, 2004:97). This approach, which is similar to vocal holding technique developed by Austin (1999 and 2001), uses the voice to create a stable and consistent musical environment. As I have discussed in Chapter Two, this is the way the young drummers learn drumming in many African cultures. The master drummer speaks the tones and the trainees say it with their mouth before playing it. In the same way, I played a rhythm with my mouth and asked them to do the same with their mouths. After mastery of the rhythm, we all played it together at the same time, while each person was invited to break away and improvise on the rhythm.

The mates later employed their voices to create individual stable and consistent rhythms, which became the music we all played together on the drums. This method “provides a

strong, yet flexible, musical environment that is experienced as very safe and containing” (Austin, 1999:145). It is safe because it was an individual creativity. Therefore, an individual mate had control over the rhythm he created. What this technique also did was that it sparked the sense of creativity even amongst those who thought they were not musically talented. This resulted in a sense of achievement amongst the mates.

At the end of the final day of the workshop, we spent over forty five minutes reflecting on the workshop. I listened to their comments and we discussed a lot. They asked many questions and I asked them as well as I could. I paid attention to their language, expression, emotion and reaction during and after the workshops. Ultimately, the interpretation of their experience during the discussion session was underpinned by these, which formed the basis of discourse on empowerment.

Language, both verbal and non-verbal, was not seen in the workshops primarily as a tool of communication, but as a tool for the construction of meanings. This was a shift from a search for the truth to an understanding of the conditions in which accounts were produced. This shift also changed my position as a researcher, rather than positioning myself as an objective observer, I actively and constantly renegotiated meaning during the conversation between the mates and me. In this thesis, language (what they said) and actions have been chosen by me as material for the analysis of the workshops and ultimately for a contribution to the discourse of restorative justice within the prison system. The box below contains the extracts from one of our discussions.

<i>Shaun:</i>	<i>What forces us back to our roots is that we are divorced from our culture. The dominant culture says we don't want you which forces us back to our roots.</i>
<i>Ben:</i>	<i>The same way emotion of not being wanted forces many people into crime. First, they are divorced from their culture and second, they are not accepted into this society, so they become aggressive and see that (crime) as a way to show their emotion.</i>
<i>Dennis:</i>	<i>Then what do you think can be done to resolve this problem?</i>
<i>Ben:</i>	<i>One of them is this workshop for example. There is need for more cultural programme like this so that people can feel that they are not completely neglected. If you bring drums you can channel their emotions in a positive way.</i>
<i>Dennis:</i>	<i>What has this workshop done to you as a person?</i>
<i>Ben:</i>	<i>The moment I heard the drum right from my cell I felt I was no longer in prison, I felt I was at home among my people. It brings back my memory and I begin to feel happy even though I am in a prison.</i>
<i>Dennis:</i>	<i>Shaun, how do you feel?</i>
<i>Shaun:</i>	<i>I feel ok really; it is only that this kind of thing does not happen very often.</i>

One important issue that came out of this discussion and the workshops as a whole was that of cultural identity. By presenting the *dùndún* as a Yorùbá musical tradition, it brought back the good memory of the mates of African descent and restored their identity. As a result of

this, I will be analysing this using concept number two of this thesis, ‘representation and presentation of culture and the notion of identity’ under the sub-heading below.

5.7. Identity in the shadow of confinement

In the above conversation, two important things emerged - culture and emotion. Though they are two different things, they are somehow connected in that conversation. According to what I observed, Shaun felt it was injustice to be rejected by this society after he had been taken from his homeland to this new culture, which he saw as hypocrisy.

According to Ben, it was this rejection that produced negative emotion, ‘emotion of not being wanted’. It seems to me that some of the mates channelled their emotion towards negative action, which later landed them in the prison. The situation was compounded by the feeling that they had completely lost their cultural identity. Therefore, the mates saw the workshops as representation and presentation of their culture. Although some of them were not Yorùbá, they still identified themselves with the *dùndún*. In that situation, the cultural origin of the *dùndún* was irrelevant to them. The important thing was that the *dùndún* represented non-western musical culture. Hence, they constructed their identity around the cultural heritage of African descent.

The workshop created a medium for reunification of the Yorùbá mates with their musical culture. It was very obvious that they were good drummers, but the justice system of the prison had denied them access to their tradition. This can be seen as cultural punishment, a theory based in the retributive justice. However, by taking their drumming tradition to them, they regained their sense of ownership as they demonstrated their drumming skills. One of them after the workshop spoke about his experiences as a drummer in his village back home.

The workshops brought back their memories and they were able to rediscover their musical potentials. Together with other mates, we recreated a community of black drummers and shared a sense of cultural identity. As drumming is very significant in African musical culture, the *dùndún* became a symbol of unity for all the black mates. The non-black mates also received the workshop with enthusiasm. Perhaps they would not have had access to it if they had not been in the prison; they learnt from the culture of each other.

The workshop also encouraged cultural tolerance in that those who might not have talked together in the normal world as a result of the differences in their race, religion, culture and sexual orientation soon became affiliated through drumming in the prison chapel. Above all, the workshop received positive feedback, as a result I promised to visit them more and more. However, by the time I went back again after my first visit, they had taken some of the mates to another prison. This is the problem of mobility of the mates in the prison system; it does not give me the opportunity to monitor the development of the mates who attended the first workshop in 2006. However, I was able to monitor the development of the mates who attended the other three workshops in 2007.

5.8. Creating a space to ‘be’ within the prison context

Within the justice system paradigm, prison is a place to ‘be’ for the mates. As I have discussed in this chapter, prison is socially constructed within a retributive justice paradigm, a retaliatory practice meant to punish the mates. As part of the punishment within this theory, mates were not allowed to be who they were before going to the prison. This was done through the deprivation of liberty. What the workshops did was to provide the mates with an atmosphere that made prison a place to ‘be’ at that point.

Nonetheless, in an environment where the occupants were denied their basic rights and needs, the workshops changed the atmosphere. The spirits were high; the mates were enthusiastic as they played the *dùndún* just for their own amusement and fun. One can only imagine what might have happened if drumming workshops took place every day throughout their prison term. This would definitely have a huge impact in the restorative process. At the end of every workshop, the mates were eager to be part of the next one. They lamented at the end of the whole project.

The time the mates spent in the drumming workshops was the only period in which they were allowed to take control of themselves rather than responding to the control imposed on them by the structure of the prison system. Therefore, another meaning of ‘be’ in this context is being in charge of something. The workshops encouraged and supported the value of providing the mates with opportunities for choice and control. The workshops gave them the ability and support to create their own spaces in a free and relaxed environment. As a result, everything in the space including the drum and the people were controlled by the mates. To encourage and allow the mates the ability to make their own choices and take control of their space, I took a flexible and adaptable approach, which provided an environment where they were able to express themselves in a safe and supported manner.

Within the prison system, where the loss of control, rights and self expression is part of punishment for mates, creating a space to be and participating in decision making during the workshop had helped the mates in a number of ways according to them. It reduced anxiety and enhanced self-expression and self-esteem. It also fostered improved coping mechanisms and maximised their sense of control. Through the workshops, mates had the opportunity to participate in music making, determined the degree and level of participation, selected songs

and drums, determined how the drums were played, and influenced the progression of each activity. All these examples facilitated active decision making, which offset feelings of helplessness and thus enhanced the mates' sense of control during the workshops.

There are various ways that one can express oneself. One important way is the voice. This is intimately linked to one's emotions and may provide a powerful measure of a person's state of mind. It is a "channel through which to express or 'push out' something from inside" (Newham, 1999:14). However, if the level of emotion is too high, one may be speechless and not able to push out what is inside. In this case, the *dùndún* can replace the voice, and becomes a medium through which one can express that emotion as the mates did throughout the workshops.

As a non-verbal communication device, the *dùndún* is such a powerful tool to communicate emotions that may otherwise be too difficult or traumatic to express through the natural voice. Furthermore, the tone variations in the *dùndún* provide more opportunity to function as a non-verbal communication device. This is why the *dùndún* has been a useful way of providing containment and validation for strong emotions, particularly when the feelings are too intense. An example of this was the 'songs of freedom I cry', which Charlie played with the drum.

The workshops created a therapeutic space where communication and authentic interactions developed, which I will refer to as where control can be exercised. This means having authority over the space and everybody in it. At the heart of this lies the *dùndún*, which became "the musical mechanisms of non-verbal communication" (Pavlicevic, 2001:282) for keeping that space under control. However, for mates who were not fit physically or

psychologically, supporting them to take control of the space was important. By supporting here I mean assisting without invading their space, but allowing them to express themselves freely. This support or assistance enabled the blind Dominican mate to attain an authentic sense of his feelings, needs and accomplishments.

There are two important terms in this concept of empowerment – allowing and supporting. To allow was to give the mates the ability to express themselves either negatively or positively about themselves or even pass a comment about others and authority. Whichever way they chose to express themselves – supporting them to move freely in that space was very important, as it could provide them the ability to resolve their feelings and they could begin to demonstrate appropriate behaviours. Psychological support is also important in this concept. The mates were not seen or treated as *prisoners*. This also made them forget that they were in confinement during the workshops. This kind of support had the capacity to provide a space, which reflected, affirmed and validated the mates' experience and allowed them to 'be' who they were before prison life.

As I mingled with them, two things might have happened psychologically in that situation. Firstly, they might have seen me as one of them – a mate like them. Secondly, they might have seen themselves as free and non-prison occupants because of my presence and activity. This was what I think happened, which provided them with psychological empowerment throughout the workshops.

5.9. Psychological empowerment

I have borrowed from Hui, Au and Fock (2004) the idea of psychological empowerment, but the notion is employed and interpreted here within the prison context. It is defined as the

mates' feelings of being trusted, informed, supported, motivated, in control, and competent. I believe that the perceptions and internal feelings of self-control affected mates' creativity during the workshops. It was the feeling that they were free to act as themselves without being influenced by the environment. For this reason, the meaning of psychological empowerment was interpreted around four cognitions developed by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) – meaning, self-determination, impact and competence. These four dimensions reflect active orientation, rather than a passive set of activities. By active orientation here, I mean an orientation in which an individual wishes and feels able to shape his or her activity within a group. Thus, psychological empowerment was a motivational concept.

5.9.1 Meaning

This is the value of an activity's goal and purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideal or standards (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Meaning in this way involves a fit between the requirements of a task and beliefs, values, and behaviours. The meaning of a task given to individual mates was around the accomplishment of that task and the accomplishment of the task was centred on self-belief, self-motivation and values in oneself. For example, all the mates perceived and even called themselves 'talking drummers'. The accomplishment of a task is "good only if it connects with what we believe we merit" (Yanal, 1987:367). This leads to self-esteem. Essentially, intrinsic task motivation requires that we value positively experiences that we derive directly from a task. The mates had the belief and confidence in their ability. They also believed that they merited the title of 'talking drummers'. My task in that situation was to see and take them the way they perceived themselves to be. Therefore, if they called themselves 'talking drummers', I had to see them as such.

However, this is not usually the case between some *dùndún* practitioners – those who were born and brought up in the drumming families in Nigeria and people like me who just learnt and practised the profession. Some practitioners who were born and brought up in the drumming families usually referred to people like me as Àyántojúbò – the talking drummers who poked their noses into other people’s profession. What this name, Àyántojúbò, meant was that it distinguished those practitioners who were born and brought up in the profession from those who took it up as a result of interest. By calling people this name, they stamped their authority within the drumming profession.

It was for this reason that a *dùndún* drummer in Nigeria refused to accept me as Àyàn. I was not born into a drumming family and I did not carry the prefix Àyàn in my name. He said “you can be a drummer, but you are not Àyàn. We Àyàn we know ourselves”⁴⁴. I cited a primary school friend who could not play the *dùndún* despite the fact that he was born into a *dùndún* drumming family and carried the prefix in his name. He readily accepted him as a true Àyàn. For him, the value of the profession lay in the tradition of being born into a *dùndún* drumming family and not just playing the drum as a result of one’s talent. But I had negotiated for myself a compromise between the two systems. My value system lay in both the talents and elements of the tradition. He did not see me as Àyàn. As a matter of fact, I did not need him to validate my status as Àyàn. I saw myself as Àyàn. This is evidence of psychological empowerment. In addition, that was how people saw and called me whenever I performed in Nigeria. For the viewers, everyone who played the *dùndún* was Àyàn.

For him, he would not have seen or called the mates the Àyàns or talking drummers. For me they were Àyàns or talking drummers because they played talking drums. This meaning

⁴⁴ He made this statement during our discussion when I was on a field trip to Nigeria in 2006.

paralleled the discussion about the use of the title of Àyàn in Chapter Two. The presence of the *dùndún* was also the presence of Àyàn Àganlú, the god of drumming. The mates became Àyàns the moment they hung the drums on their shoulders. That was the meaning that I ascribed to them. The significance of the title was placed on the drum and not just on an aspect of the *dùndún* drumming tradition or professionalism about the practice. Moreover, as someone whose goal was to empower the already disempowered mates in their confinement, I could only call them talking drummers or the Àyàns. They needed me to validate their status as Àyàns and I did. However, if I had behaved towards them like the resident Àyàn did to me and refused to call them talking drummers or the Àyàns, then I did not merit the same title, which the people gave me whenever I performed in Nigeria.

5.9.2. Self-determination

This is relatively similar to competence (which I will discuss later), but where competence is a mastery of behaviour, self-determination is an individual's sense of having a choice in initiating and regulating actions (Deci, Connell & Ryan, 1989). Self-determination includes the opportunity to come up with their own ideas without being inhibited by people of higher status. This includes the opportunity to take part in decision making in a group irrespective of one's status.

I observed during the workshops in Portsmouth that self-determination helped the mates. They felt determined to use the drum to say the phrase 'songs of freedom I cry', even when I asked them not to worry about getting it right. They wanted to attain the same status as the *dùndún* practitioners in Nigeria. Furthermore, they felt determined to create their own individual piece of music when I asked them to. For example, the mates were given the task of creating individual rhythm, for the whole group using the *ìyáàlu dùndún*. The creator of

each rhythm became the leader of that ensemble as he made decisions about the pace. They gradually developed a leadership skill. Amongst the mates, self-determination reflected autonomy in the initiation and the continuation of activities and processes. Creating their own piece of music on the *dùndún* and regulating how the music went was seen as their greatest accomplishment according to them. They felt they were in control of their own musical life and sometimes the whole workshops.

5.9.3. Impact

This is the degree to which an individual can influence others and activities. It is the effect or result that one's action has over other people around him during the course of that action. On my side, my drumming skills, which I demonstrated on the *dùndún* had an impact on the mates. This changed their attitudes towards themselves and also made them believe that they could also be good drummers. This is one of the concepts of empowerment that I discussed earlier in this chapter.

Furthermore, Charlie's song of freedom had a tremendous impact on other mates and me. This song made me rethink my own position and be thankful to God for giving me the freedom to do whatever I wanted, even to the point of visiting them in the prison. A Yorùbá proverb says: 'an old man who sweats while talking is indirectly crying'. To put this in a context, I knew that Charlie spoke from the abundance of his heart, and nothing showed this more clearly than the fact that his eyes turned red. They all discussed their feelings in relation to the environment.

My assumption about psychological empowerment within the prison environment is that it is a change in a set of cognitions that have been shaped by that environment. Empowerment

reflects the ongoing ebb and flow of people's perceptions about themselves in relation to their environment. It is my belief that our perception of our environment can affect the way we see and relate to ourselves.

Furthermore, some external factors such as what we see, do, know about ourselves and how people see or relate to us can affect our self perception. This can either lead to a psychological breakdown or empowerment. For example, they became mates not because they were born as mates, but because of the environment, institution and certain constructions (Foucault, 1977). For example, Shaun saw himself as a mate despite the fact that he was once a university lecturer. Not only had the environment changed his self perception, it has also made him lose his self understanding. He did not see himself again as a teacher, but as a mate living in confinement.

However, what the workshops tried to do was to help the mates to change their perception about themselves in relation to their environment. For example, Ben expressed himself in relation to the activities; "Yes, I'm seeing myself outside. I'm dizzy. I'm dizzy. (Everybody laughs). I'm thinking I'm outside. I'm jumping bum-bum-bum-pa-bum...I'm far away – I'm there. I'm dizzy. I'm dizzy. Da Da Da Da-da Da-da Da"⁴⁵. At that moment, Ben did not see himself again as a mate living in confinement, but as someone performing at the shrine of their gods in South Africa, fulfilling his duties.

The external activity (*dùndún* drumming) had an impact on his self perception. This changed how he saw himself during the workshops. However, this did not change the fact that he was still in the prison as a mate. What this means is that one can be in prison and still feel that he

⁴⁵ During a discussion with Ben after the workshops

is not imprisoned because only the body can be imprisoned, the spirit cannot be. It might be possible for one to feel imprisoned even without living in the prison (like those who are placed under house arrest for political reasons). The mates will need a high level of psychological empowerment both within and outside the prison; otherwise the impact of prison might make some of them still feel imprisoned even after their prison terms end. This might be one of the reasons why there is a high level of re-offending in England and Wales.

5.9.4. Competence

This is similar to what Conger and Kanunga (1988) call ‘self-efficacy’. It is an individual’s belief in his capability to perform the activities given to him with skill. In this context, competence is analogous to agency beliefs, personal mastery, or effort-performance expectancy. This can be similar to self-esteem, ‘a general feeling of self-worth’ (Brockner, 1989), which can be related to empowerment. This means that individuals who hold themselves in high esteem are likely to extend and express their competency in whatever they do. Furthermore, they are more likely to assume an active participation with regard to any task they are given.

Competence is similar to locus of control. It is the degree to which people believe that they, rather than the external forces, determine what happens in their lives. It has been observed that “individuals with an internal locus of control regarding life in general are more likely to feel capable of shaping their...environment” (Spreitzer, 1995:1446). The locus of control is characterised by internal and personal conviction of individuals regarding their lives rather than the external circumstances and environmental situation. It lies in one’s internal urge towards a goal. Charlie, the young Jamaican, was a perfect example; he had conviction that he could use the drum to talk and he demonstrated his competency.

He made a great impact in the whole drumming workshops. He saw himself as a valued resource having drumming competencies worth contributing to the workshops and created what later became 'the mates' anthem'. He in turn empowered and influenced others in the group. Other mates also demonstrated their competencies. They were not passive; rather they were active participants in the workshops.

However, the sense that a person is controlled by events or one's life is structured and timetabled can lead to tension, a more negative emotional feeling and tone, and low self-esteem. Thus, individuals with low self-esteem are not likely to see themselves as competent in whatever they do. They are not likely to make a difference or influence their task or group. They are more likely to hold a passive view in a group. On the first day of the workshop, Tim and Liam had low self-esteem. For Tim, this was understandable as he was blind. Liam held himself with high self-esteem after the first workshop as he became active. Thus, self-esteem is positively related to psychological empowerment.

The objective goal of the workshops was to empower the mates psychologically, so that they could express the same strong level of self-esteem after their prison terms. While I observed a prospect for this during the workshops, my concern was that they might revert to the identity that the prison system gave them – *prisoners/inmates* – and not the one they acquired during the workshops – talking drummers/Àyàns. Nonetheless, Liam had started a band in the prison and he planned to continue this when released from the prison. He had a conviction in himself that he would one day become a popular musician. If Liam's self-esteem remains high, he may be able to accomplish his dreams and become a musician after his term. Other mates could build on their drumming skills and apply these in their chosen profession in the future.

However, for them to maintain the high level of self-esteem which they acquired during the workshops, they will probably need a consistent and stable environment that supports that. This can be provided through the support of the wardens who deal with them on a daily basis. While psychological empowerment was necessary to give mates the energy to move beyond their confinement, I will suggest that discretionary empowerment is also necessary for the prison wardens that oversee them.

5.10. Discretionary empowerment

Discretionary empowerment provides employees with discretion and autonomy in connection with their work (Hui, *et al* 2004). Discretionary empowerment is centred on self-control and here is directed towards the prison wardens and refers to the management practice of providing them with discretion and autonomy within the prison system. It is the ability to use discretion to effect a positive change within an environment without having to wait for the order from superior officers who may not even be within the premises, thereby causing delay to a matter that needs urgent attention.

There is a general consensus that reliance on bureaucracy and organisational rules is ineffective for the assurance of quality service delivery (Schneider, 1980). Discretionary empowerment can be useful in this context. It can provide the prison staff with a mastery of the prison and the environment and the freedom to make decisions in their job. The extent of the freedom of choice and control they feel they have can enhance their relationship with the mates. Instead of close supervision to harness the prison wardens' free will, discretionary empowerment can be a way to enhance job performance and satisfaction.

Prison wardens may achieve a sense of mastery over the environment through two means. Firstly, by making use of their power to actively manipulate the environment (primary control), and secondly by relying on adaptation and powerful others (secondary control). Discretionary empowerment can provide the prison wardens with primary control.

The prison wardens' desire to help mates in the process of restoration is another factor that can moderate the effect of discretionary empowerment on job satisfaction. However, as the prison is constructed within a retributive system, the wardens are not obliged to help in the restoration process of the mates unless they can reconstruct prison within a restorative paradigm. This means that the wardens will need to have a desire to do a good job – treating the mates as humanly as possible, so that they can see themselves as part of the wider community and not the prison community. If the wardens can consider the delivery of superior human value to be their means of primary control, they can share a strong desire to help the mates in the process of restoration and rehabilitation. Providing the wardens with discretionary power can significantly lead to a good relationship between the prison wardens and the mates, just like the mates and me during the workshops.

5.11. Conclusion

As I have discussed in this chapter, prison is a very complex institution and it is grounded within a retributive justice paradigm. The mates had lost their power, cultural identity and adopted another identity. They suffered from various psychological problems. Restorative justice is another discourse. This has led to a number of initiatives by the government and various organisations. Restorative justice in this chapter focused on the restoration and rehabilitation of the mates. I employed the *dùndún* for the main purpose of empowering the mates both physically and psychologically.

The concept of empowerment worked in this context as I had imagined. By giving the mates a number of tasks, it channelled their emotions towards the creative arts and they felt de-stressed. Energy is neutral. The mates had used it negatively and became prison inhabitants. In the workshops they used that same energy positively. Ben, especially, saw drumming as an aggression control device; 'if you bring drums you can channel their emotions in a positive way'⁴⁶. The workshop gave them the energy they needed to be themselves. It also changed their perception of themselves. They did not see themselves as mates living in the prison during the workshops, but performers. This is psychological empowerment. They expressed themselves freely without fear. The workshop boosted their confidence and their self-esteem also increased. My feeling is that the workshops had done what I intended.

Because of the limitations expressed at the beginning of this chapter, the only claim for empowerment that can reliably be made relates to the duration of the workshops. However, by linking these claims to the literature on psychological empowerment, self-determination, self-efficacy and discretionary empowerment, it is possible to hypothesize about the possible long term empowering effect on the lives of the mates. Nonetheless, my observations during the workshops, have led me to believe that drumming could have a useful role in the restorative and rehabilitative process of the mates. Liam had started a band in the prison. Others also expressed their interest in the continuity of the project. If they could apply the skills they acquired during the workshops in their various professions in the future, the mates may be able to reclaim their power and rights. I would like to be able to continue working with them as a contribution to their rehabilitation process.

⁴⁶ This extract from the group discussion session with the mate was taken from my personal journal.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

This thesis has examined a part of my journey as a *dùndún* practitioner. It has looked at two projects to recontextualise the *dùndún* tradition in Hampshire. What these have shown is the complexity of issues involved in the process of recontextualisation. I have analysed them using two frames. One concentrates on the legacy of colonialism – both on the formerly colonised but also on the former imperial culture. This is a layer in the concept of cultural understanding and misunderstanding. The other issue is power. I have examined this through the lens of Foucault. This has an impact on how meaning is constructed and how far empowerment is possible. The people in power or positions of authority can construct meanings in the way that pleases them; their interpretations and meanings become dominant and are used by the gatekeepers to admit or not admit people who would like to enter the domain that they control. This chapter will summarise the findings of the thesis. I shall group these under the concepts set out in the introduction. Finally, this chapter will conclude with suggestions for further research.

6.1.1. Cultural dialogue, understanding and integration

Cultural integration concerns the openness of cultures to understand one another and enter into dialogue. Dialogue is necessary first and from that understanding may or may not come. Only in the presence of both dialogue and its associated understanding is the way of integration possible.

But is change an inevitable part of the processes of integration and how much change is possible without losing the identity of the original culture altogether? It would appear that

change is an inevitable feature of the *dùndún* tradition throughout this investigation. In Hampshire I observed that change can include the culture and music of the *dùndún* as a drum and its interpretation. The first change was the musical role of the *ìyáàlu dùndún* in an ensemble. As I have discussed in Chapter Two, the *dùndún* is a dominant drum in Yorùbá musical culture. Its dominance can be seen in all aspects of performing arts and cultural practices, which is why it has been hugely recontextualised in Nigeria.

Generally, in every instance where the *dùndún* drums have been integrated into other musical genre or tradition, the role of the other leading instruments is usually reduced to mere musical backing of the *ìyáàlu dùndún*. For example, in both *Ọbalúayé* and *Ọba Kòso* by Kola Ogunmola and Duro Ladipo respectively, the musical role of the *bàtá* was reduced as the *ìyáàlu dùndún* became prominent. Euba (1990) notes that; “the ability of the *ìyáàlu* drummer to talk with his instrument means that he can impart his drum with a dramatic role” (Euba, 1990:425). Naturally, the *dùndún* drumming tradition contains some dramatic elements – dance, poetry, miming, dance-drama, storytelling, etc. This is what gives the *dùndún* tradition the edge over other drumming traditions. However, when the *dùndún* moves out of its cultural domain my experience is that it loses its dramatic elements and dominance. I understand this as a practitioner who has moved away from his cultural origin. I was ready to forgo the leading role of the *dùndún* in the church. I considered this potential sacrifice necessary to the process of integration.

In this area, there was a marked contrast between the churches in Nigeria, Hungary and Hampshire. In Nigeria and the two churches in Hungary mentioned in Chapter Four, integration of the *dùndún* and other western instruments took place because there was a willingness to enter into cultural dialogue which here led to cultural understanding.

However, in Hampshire “a dialogue of the deaf” (Coser, 1979) occurred on both sides – a dialogue that yields no cultural understanding. As a practitioner I was unable to integrate the *dùndún* into the two churches in Hampshire, for without a dialogue of listening and hearing there is no understanding and therefore no integration. I am going to summarise the reasons why the dialogue was not possible.

I think that this was due to preformed judgements on the part of the musical gatekeepers which were a product of colonial attitudes. One of the problems appeared to be the association of the *dùndún* in the minds of the gatekeepers at the two churches. Because of its ‘natural’ appearance it became associated with what to them was an alien belief system – i.e. paganism. This seems to have been drawn from the meaning ascribed to it by the colonising missionaries. The drum showed clearly its relationship to the natural world, being made of pure animal skin and unpolished wood. This was not disguised by modern day technology. This appearance possibly linked the *dùndún* with paganism and thus unacceptable in a Christian context.

The problem for cultural dialogue here lay at least partly in the area of competing/conflicting belief systems. The belief system of the two churches was shaped by a very particular Christian tradition and the gatekeepers saw it in their brief to protect this tradition from anything that might be counter to it. Although the workshops in the prison were in the context of a Christian chapel, two factors operated to open up the space. One was the Christian tradition of the chaplains and the other the setting of the Chapel in the context of a state institution.

The music leaders in the two churches in Hampshire would have been selected by the group because they were in tune with the tradition of those churches. The prison chaplains would have been selected not by common consensus of the participants but by a mixture of church and state. This ensured that the chaplains – the gatekeepers in this situation – were not only in tune with Christian theology but also with government directives and policies. They had to embrace a variety of potentially conflicting belief systems and were selected because they could. So an individual belief system did not bar my way as the prevailing culture already reflected a diversity of interests and a certain flexibility of approach. The value system of the prison chapel, in addition to reflecting a Christian theology, also was required to address the cultural diversity of the prison inhabitants. This gave me the chance to enter first into dialogue, from which came understanding; the *dùndún* was then given an opportunity to be integrated into the prison culture.

It was more possible for the churches to be and maintain a monocultural identity than the prison chapel. The church leaders were not under any obligation to follow any government initiatives or satisfy the cultural needs of the congregation, because membership was a matter of choice. The TCH and CCH communities were able to develop and maintain their own particular belief system.

The congregations of the churches were self selecting. If people did not like the particular belief system of the group they could leave. However, the mates were not in the prison by choice but by the law, although attendance at Chapel events in prison was voluntary. This was one of the few choices that remained in their lives. This prepared the ground for the *dùndún* to be integrated within the personal lives of the mates. This was easier because the workshops were seen as separate events from the regular worship of the Chapel. Although

the system could accommodate the *dùndún* workshop and the workshop could be integrated into the prison system, there was no attempt to produce a musical integration by merging it with the regular musical culture of the Chapel. Integration within the institutional system was made easier because there was no attempt to integrate the *dùndún* into the regular musical structures of prison worship in their chapel.

The conclusion one might draw from these studies is that there is a route into integration for practitioners of an art that has not traditionally been part of a particular culture. The first need is dialogue which happened in both two case studies – the two churches and prison. However, one was a dialogue of the deaf and the other a dialogue of hearing and listening. In TCH and CCH the situation for such a dialogue was created by the closed nature of the belief systems of the groups, which resulted in them taking a defensive position in the dialogue. The self-selecting group of TCH and CCH were concerned to define their own particular position within their group and appoint gatekeepers who will defend it.

Only the dialogue of hearing and listening can lead to understanding and only if understanding is present, is integration likely. The existence of a variety of agencies in controlling a particular space (as in the prison) is more likely to be open to a productive dialogue. However, the integration of the *dùndún* into the prison was at an organisational level not a musical level as it had been in the churches in Hungary. The route into musical integration is much more complex and takes a great deal more time, understanding and dialogue in order to be achieved.

6.1.2. Representation and presentation of culture and notions of identity

This thesis has been about my personal journey as a *dùndún* practitioner. I realised, as it progressed, how much the *dùndún* plays an extremely important part in my personal identity. This was the product of a culture where music and/or musical instruments are significant in the identity of all musical practitioners, including the *dùndún*. The selection and training of these as set out in Chapter Two ensures that almost from birth the musical instrument is part of the child's emerging identity. I realised that the same is not true of most Western musical practitioners. So, as a practitioner whose identity was in part constructed around the *dùndún*, I faced some issues at both a cultural and a personal level in Hampshire. These issues were rooted in a different perception of the relationship between the musical instrument and its practitioner in the two cultures' different value systems.

The churches saw the main identity of the congregations as residing in the presence of people who embraced a particular form of Christian belief. As such, they could embrace a variety of different ethnic identities simply by having people from different places seated in their worship. For the two churches, identity, at least superficially, had nothing to do with instruments. Indeed, people might be expected to play whatever instruments that the church asked them to play. So, I was asked to play the conga. I refused, because I saw the meaning of the *dùndún* differently. It was not simply an addition to my Christian identity but a central part of my self-identification.

So here I encountered a problem of meaning within the process of my identity. For them the important part of their identity was a belief system; for me, it was the *dùndún*. The result of this mismatch was that the two churches did not have any problem with me as a member of the congregation provided I could leave the *dùndún* behind outside the church. I could

worship and do other things in the church; but for me, my identity was too greatly diminished by leaving the *dùndún* outside the church. So, I experienced in Hampshire what the *dùndún* practitioners experienced during the colonial period in Nigeria.

In Chapter One, I asked how the *dùndún* in the new contexts would inform my practice as a practitioner. One big issue was the flexibility in my identity construction. I might have adopted a Foucauldian strategy of resistance through persisting in being a member of the church band playing the conga as required. This would have demanded fluidity on my part in the area of identity construction. I asked myself if I could agree to play a conga drum as a prelude to being able to play the *dùndún*. I would gain acceptance and then have more chance to manoeuvre. It was a strategy that may or may not have been successful. However, my self-examination as a *dùndún* practitioner led me to the point of understanding how central playing the *dùndún* was to the construction of my identity which had its origin in Yorùbá notions of identity.

The two churches used the western system of identity construction, which is based around people's beliefs where a musical instrument is simply an adjunct to these and not a central feature. As we have seen above, theirs was not an open system that allowed for the inclusion of new elements (in this case, instruments). They offered me a compromise – the conga drums - which I could not accept. I saw this as trying to make my identity the same as theirs, based on a philosophy that sees relationships as making the *Other* the same as you. These ideas are based on the philosopher, Levinas (1969), whose work questioned the *Same* as the basis of ethics, favouring relationship with *Otherness* as a relationship based on allowing the *Other* a distinct identity rather than making the *Other* the *Same* as the relating *I*.

By offering me a compromise, they failed to see that it was not just any drum that was central to my identity but the *dùndún* drum. I was not just a drummer but a *dùndún* drummer. The American church in Budapest had a greater understating of the way the *dùndún* fitted into the construction of my identity. This may be because music played a greater part in the construction of Hungarian identity than an English identity. It may be because the Americans had also established the church as part of their identity within the Hungarian culture. They were happy for me to present the *dùndún* as an important part of my identity within their own identity.

In the prison context notions of identity were more fluid. Part of the role of the prison system is to enable people to establish a new identity – one that will be more acceptable to wider society. They were open to the possibility that this could be around a musical instrument. I was able to present the *dùndún* as part of my identity with the possibility that it might become a part of the mates' identity. There was a greater sense of experimentation in the face of marginalisation. In the prison, certainly for the mates, identity was regarded as potentially fluid – there was the possibility of change. This gave the possibility of exploring different ways of identity construction, such as it being based on an instrument.

In the churches, however, identity was much more fixed and related purely to a belief system around which its culture was constructed. To enter the community meant assuming the identity the community expected of you. In the two churches I had to be the *Same* as them to enter. There was no possibility of the valuing of the *Other* that was different from them. In the prison the possibility of embracing the *Other* as an agent of personal change was a real possibility. In the context of the prison differences in identity were regarded as potentially

transformative whereas in the churches these differences were regarded as potentially disruptive.

6.1.3. Tradition, authenticity and originality

This concept has been developed throughout the thesis. The interface between tradition, authenticity and originality in the Yorùbá context has been contrasted with the way in which these concepts have been constructed in Western culture, as was explored in Chapter Two. My examination of tradition is that it is formed by shared beliefs within a society and that this differs from one culture to another. It could be said that to ensure continuity, it is important for a tradition to remain within its society where its cultural values can be appreciated. Interestingly, tradition, even within its original culture, is not fixed, it evolves. When a tradition moves out of its culture, it can cling to the strands rigidly that make up its authenticity within its original culture or accommodate itself within the new culture. This may mean reviewing the strands of authenticity within its original culture. It also depends on the people of the new culture choosing to make or accept it as part of their own, e.g. the *dùndún* from the Ìbàràbáland to the Yorùbáland.

Notions of authenticity are what define the nature of any particular tradition. We have seen how, in Chapter Two, authenticity in the *dùndún* tradition in Nigeria was characterised by:

- the naming of the drummer,
- the hierarchical structure of the ensemble,
- drumming technique,
- features of the *dùndún*.

The ability to grasp these gave the practitioners power. However, in the Western context the notion of acquiring the name Àyàn is clearly not possible by birth but only by skill acquisition. Practitioners could grasp the nature of the ensemble and I hope that in future it might be possible for me to set up *dùndún* ensembles in the UK. However, in these two case studies I was a drummer on my own. Although I took the whole family of drums into the prison context and attempted to explain how the hierarchical structure worked, it was not possible to get beyond the level of explanation because there was not sufficient time to establish the skills necessary for the formation of an ensemble on the part of the mates. This leaves the acquisition of the drumming technique as the main way of defining the authenticity of the tradition in this new context.

We have also seen how in its original context the drum had multiple identities which needed to be understood by the practitioner as:

- a drum,
- a person,
- a living being,
- a god,
- a spirit,
- an influential phenomenon.

This knowledge consequently becomes a source of power for the practitioners in performance in Nigeria. However, in the Western context, the drum is traditionally considered as a drum while an influential phenomenon and notions of the authenticity of the drum residing in it being a person, a living being, a god or spirit are not often found in that tradition. This means

that to include these notions within a drumming tradition would be original for Western drummers, whereas they would be traditional for Yorùbá drummers.

Another area of authenticity explored in Chapter Two was the gendered nature of the tradition. In the original tradition the notion of women *dùndún* drummers is not authentic. However, in Western culture where the construction of gender roles is different and in the process of changing, the notion of a tradition whose authenticity includes only a single gender appears increasingly problematic, particularly to women.

Having established how authenticity is constructed within the *dùndún* tradition, we are in a position to examine what constitutes originality. We saw in Chapter Two that improvisation is very important in the *dùndún* drumming tradition. It is embedded in the tradition but not in the same way that it has been defined and established in Western traditions. One important element here is that the *dùndún* tradition is an oral tradition and has not developed a notated element despite the work of colonisers and ethnomusicologists. The place of improvisation in a literate tradition is very different from its place in an oral tradition. For example, improvisation plays little part in the training of a Western classical musician, although it has a greater part in the world of popular music which has more orality within its tradition. Therefore, the inclusion of improvisation at all is regarded as original and a break with tradition.

The concept of authenticity in the oral culture of the *dùndún* operates differently from the way it is perceived in the literate Western tradition. Moore's (2002) understanding of authenticity is defined around the loyalty of a performer to the composer's intention. The realisation of the composer's scores at the performance is based in the Western tradition.

For example, anyone who plays the music of Béla Bartók can be expected to realise the score as Béla Bartók composed it. It is then that the performer can be seen as playing Béla Bartók's music authentically. In this process, from a Yorùbá point-of-view the performer is not being authentic, because he is limiting his own sense of creativity. Here the concept of authenticity within the European classical tradition is very different from the concept of authenticity within Yorùbá culture. For the European classical tradition authenticity resides in faithfulness to a notated score. Then the performance is real. In the Yorùbá tradition the performance is real when the performer adds his own creativity. Being real in this way is central to my concept of authenticity which is based in my Yorùbá culture.

However, as we saw in Chapter Two, continuous creativity is an important element that defines authenticity in the *dùndún* drumming tradition. Originality is built into the structure of the tradition itself and controlled by the tradition. The drummer is taught to change and adapt according to context. To exercise your own creativity effectively within a particular context is to embody the drum. This means that the *dùndún*'s repertoire is continually reworked to fit in with the variety of contexts in which it is used.

In Yorùbá culture, musical performance is not about reading from a score, it is about embodiment. Thus to be authentic is “to let each impression and germ of a feeling come to completion wholly in itself” (Rilke, 1954:29). Authenticity within the *dùndún* drumming tradition is constructed around the practitioner who adds his own creative input into the performance. A practitioner can be seen as authentic when he “learns to let the unconscious creative process work itself out in its own way within him, without imposing the assumptions derived from social expectations and reinforced by the intellect” (Guignon, 2004:74). An

authentic performer is someone who takes in the music and lets it sink into his body to produce his own performance.

The *dùndún* ensemble consists of a variety of complex rhythms played simultaneously – indeed this is the essence of the structure of the ensemble. The European traditions developed a primary interest in melody and harmony rather than rhythm. So the polyrhythm of innovative Western classical composers like Stravinsky was regarded as original because this was new to the culture. So it is often true in cultural migration that what is traditional in the original culture becomes original in the new culture. So we can see that as the *dùndún* moved into Western cultures, authenticity was forced to be redefined and consisted largely in the acquisition of skills and the limitation of the identity of the drum.

In the two churches in Hampshire I, as a *dùndún* practitioner, came face to face with a strong tradition that was interested in maintaining itself in the same way as the colonisers were concerned to establish their own culture on a foreign soil. Here the gatekeepers of the churches were concerned with the maintenance of the tradition rather than the developing of it. Had they admitted the *dùndún* there might have been the possibility of originality within their tradition. However, the presence of the multiple identities within the *dùndún* tradition, including notions of the drum as person, god or spirit, might have been a deterrent for the gatekeepers. They could never have accepted those aspects of the *dùndún* as it would have been in conflict with the belief systems which supported their community. Because access was denied and the possibility of an original contribution refused, it was not possible to establish what authenticity would have been in the church context.

The situation in the prison was different. In a situation in which the gatekeepers perceived the mates as needy, they were prepared to try original solutions to their perceived problems. This willingness to accept original solutions to complex problems enabled me to explain the musical traditions of the *dùndún* to the mates. The result was that the mates not only understood the *dùndún* as part of a musical tradition of the Yorùbá but also were able to embody it to their advantage. For most of them, it was the first time they had seen the Yorùbá *dùndún* drums and also played them.

The mates showed immense enthusiasm and this enabled them to embody the tradition in their own ways. I gave them basic skills and rather than demand a perfect adherence to the tradition allowed them freedom to develop them as they wanted. So they played the drums in their own way. This could be seen as the continuous creativity of the tradition as described above. They developed a playing technique that was appropriate for the context of the prison chapel in the same way as the *dùndún* practitioners in Nigeria would develop the rhythms for different festivities. This brought about in them an experience that I would describe as authentic, in that it embraced sufficient of the measures of authenticity within the original culture to claim such a title. Guignon (2004) explains why: “when we are part of the great flow of life, we are who we truly are” (Guignon, 2004:73). Their emotions, feelings, responses, thoughts and desires were real and expressed via the *dùndún*. They had embodied the art.

The summary of this concept in this investigation is that in the church context the *dùndún* drumming tradition met a well-established tradition that allowed originality only within its own musical cultural limits. In the prison I met a tradition which was prepared to accept

originality in terms of a new musical culture. This resulted in an embodied experience for the participants that can be termed authentic.

6.1.4. Construction of meanings

There is considerable debate in the literature about how meaning is constructed within the experience of music and who determines what the meaning is and might be. All changes of space for a tradition potentially bring about new meanings. When I took the drum into the prison I took it into an unlikely place – a place where it is not used in Nigeria. This was possible because the prison chaplain (the gatekeeper) saw the possibilities of new meanings in this context.

In these projects I have been concerned with the meaning ascribed to the experience by two different groups of people – the so-called gatekeepers and the participants in the prison workshops. I have compared these with the meanings ascribed to the *dùndún* in Yorùbá culture. I will deal with the gatekeepers first.

“Meaning is constructed...by those who hold positions of authority” (Boyce-Tillman, 2007:11). The notion of meaning, as I have explored it in Chapter One, is closely bound up with issues of value. If the meaning ascribed to a tradition is in tune with the value systems of the dominant group, it will be accepted. If it is not, it will not be. As a performer, I have been attempting to take the *dùndún* into new situations in the context of British culture. Whether such a recontextualisation was possible, depended heavily on the meanings ascribed to the *dùndún* by the gatekeepers in the church and the prison who occupied positions of authority and could control who had access to their space. It appeared to me that the meanings ascribed

to the *dùndún* by the gatekeepers in the church contexts were a legacy of the colonial missionaries.

I have shown in Chapters Two and Four how these were different from the meaning ascribed to the *dùndún* in the Nigerian context. Here there was a mismatch between my intended meaning of the *dùndún* in the context of the church music and the meaning ascribed to it by the church gatekeepers. For them, the meaning ascribed to the *dùndún* was associated with a belief system which was not acceptable within their belief system – indeed was one that the colonial missionaries had actively opposed. So the *dùndún* represented a different value system, which did not fit into their frames of meanings for church music.

Very broadly, two quite different meaning systems met and failed to engage with one another - the meaning from my cultural perspective and the church perspective. We have already seen above how the appearance of the drum connected it with the elements of the earth and the possible pagan meanings that might be ascribed to this. These were not the meanings ascribed to the *dùndún* in Yorùbá culture where it was associated with speech and communication and not belief. I decided that the church leaders were unable to view the meaning of the drum in anything but a religious frame because this was a frame of great significance for them.

The situation in the prison was much more complex which perhaps made it easier to find an entry point. The prison itself is a state institution with a very particular role to play for wider society. This is primarily to protect the wider community from people who are considered to be a threat to it. However, as we have seen in Chapter Five, there is a complexity of thinking around what should happen within the prison context with debates about retributive and

restorative justice. In this particular prison, I linked with a prison chaplain who in his thinking had embraced a number of principles associated with the notions of restorative justice. These included ideas of re-empowering the mates who had been disempowered in wider society.

Although in the prison I was again working in a church context – the prison chapel whose space was controlled by the chaplain – in this gatekeeper I encountered a person within whose value system notions of access to communication for people who have lost the power to communicate were part of his values. So the meanings that I ascribed to the *dùndún*, drawing on the meanings in Yorùbá culture, fitted within the frame of those values held by the gatekeeper chaplain. Although he would not have been familiar with the meanings ascribed to the *dùndún* in the Yorùbá context, nonetheless, there was sufficient congruence between the meanings that I ascribed to it – speech and communication – and his value systems – re-empowering the disempowered, for us to be able to enter into a meaningful dialogue.

What I observed is that if within the institution itself there is a debate about its meaning, it is more likely to be able to accept people who bring new meanings into the debate. The prison as an institution does not have a clean and clear definition, hence it is defined both in the context of retributive and restorative justice. As the workshops were grounded in the restorative justice paradigm, this allowed the possibility of taking the *dùndún* to the prison. On the other hand, institutions which are very clear about their meanings and belief systems, like the two churches that I encountered, could not accept any other meaning than the one already established.

For the mates, personal empowerment was their central meaning and one that was deep in the potential meanings seen by the prison chaplain, who acted as my gatekeeper. Though they were interested in the cultural and musical meanings of the *dùndún*, they preferred to construct the meanings of the *dùndún* around their needs.

So here we can see that the area in which meaning is perceived to be, is important in the process of recontextualisation. The church saw meaning primarily in terms of belief systems and could not make the leap to the meanings as they were perceived in my culture. In the prison context a chaplain anxious to give meaning to the lives of the mates was concerned with empowerment. This is very close to the meanings of the *dùndún* in its original culture as an empowering instrument. Here the process of recontextualisation of the *dùndún* was well received.

6.1.5. Empowerment

I have mentioned in Chapter Two that the *dùndún* connotes power within Yorùbá musical culture. With regard to social constructionism, the people holding power within the Yorùbá society have constructed the *dùndún* as a powerful instrument in relation to the mythological belief about the drum. As a result, the practitioners share in this empowerment because the *dùndún* acts as a symbol of power on every occasion that requires their services. In Yorùbá society the *dùndún* is part of the dominant culture.

When I, as a *dùndún* practitioner, moved from Nigeria to the UK I lost the position I had as a member of the dominant culture. Here, like me, the drum was a stranger who had to find a place in the power systems of Hampshire. When a new knowledge appears in a society, it will usually be in the position of a subjugated knowledge and have to work at negotiating a place

for itself in the prevailing dominant culture. The two projects described in this thesis represent the complexities involved in this process.

In the two churches in Hampshire, clear hierarchical power structures were already in place. The most highly prized values were ultimately vested with power and these included race, gender, culture, spirituality and class. A higher rank for one value here excluded a higher rank for another. Following the footsteps of the colonial missionaries, the white were ranked higher than the black in TCH and CCH, therefore vested with power. I belong to the race that was ranked the lowest. Also, certain instruments already had power given to them because they had higher rank. This was because their players belonged to the race with higher ranking and they had already negotiated their place in positions of power. In the prison context, the situation was different. There was no hierarchical structure amongst the mates, which gave them the opportunity to live together as one and which enabled me to mingle with them.

In my experience, to be part of the dominant culture is to be empowered. As a practitioner I enjoyed the experience of controlling and managing the energy flow of a group of people as part of a festivity. To analyse this in more detail we need to look at the various forms of power as identified by Barrett, Stockholm and Burke in an article bringing together the ideas of Foucault with that of the anthropologist, Eric Wolf. They identify four understandings of power linked with various philosophers:

1. Power inherent in an individual (Nietzschean view).
2. Power as capacity of ego to impose her or his will on others
(Weberian view).
3. Power as control over the contexts in which people interact (tactical

or organizational power).

4. Structural power: “By this I mean the power manifest in relationships that not only operates within settings and domains but also organizes and orchestrated the settings themselves, and that specifies the direction and distribution of energy flows” (Barrett, Stokholm and Burke, 2001:468).

The musical practitioners in the church contexts had acquired the fourth type of power, possibly with some difficulty. They managed the bands in the two churches and therefore controlled the musical landscape that would operate in these contexts. Because music is such an important part of Christian worship, they were able very effectively to orchestrate the settings themselves, and control the energy flow within them. They had real power over the dynamics of the worship itself, as musicians often do in Christianity, whether it is the more free evangelical worship or the more formal settings in the cathedrals.

As we have seen above, because of my background and experience my performance as a *dùndún* practitioner has authenticity. I have achieved a sense of the Nietzschean power – number 1 in the list above. I also played the *dùndún* for the two gatekeepers in the church, thinking that I would demonstrate my skill for them. What I possibly did was to demonstrate my authentic power as a *dùndún* practitioner and to therefore set myself up as a threat to their structural power. I think it is fair to speculate that the fear of losing their power over the energy of the worship to me and the *dùndún* was one of the reasons behind the hostility.

I saw the possibility of empowering the churches and the individuals within them through adding my power to theirs. My dream was that, perhaps, the *dùndún* could have been another added-value to the existing musical empowerment in the church. Perhaps because they

perceived our meeting as an encounter with a practitioner who was potentially stronger than them, they were unable to enter into such a relationship. This replicates, to some extent, the position of the missionary/colonisers who encountered the religious rituals powered by the *dùndún* in Nigeria. Their response to this was to attempt to abolish it, because to merge with it might affect their ability to control the people. Perhaps the two churches were contented with the empowerment that their instruments were able to provide and the gatekeepers were not going to risk their own positions by allowing other forms of musical power in.

In the prison context there was the third form of power which Foucault dealt with in detail in his text *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*, ‘Power as control over the contexts in which people interact (tactical or organizational power)’. The wider society had chosen to assert its institutional power over the mates and had deprived them of their power by limiting their freedom. In this context the prison officers (including the chaplain), were operating organizational power rather than structural power. The power that gave them their organisational power – i.e. the state- was remote from the institution – the individual prison – rather than being intimately bound up with the energy flow within it as it was in the structural power of the church positions. It is not easy to mount a threat to the organizational power of state. The workshops could not give power to mates to revolt. Therefore, I was not perceived to be a threat to the state in the way that I was in the churches.

Because the power relations within the prison were not under any threat from me, the *dùndún* and I were able to exercise our full cultural power throughout the duration of the workshops. This was helped by the attitude of the chaplain who saw the need for the mates to gain some of their own power within the context of the organisational disempowerment.

A further aspect was the area in which the power was being exercised. In the church situation my power was in the same area as theirs – the area of music. In the prison I was not negotiating with musicians but with a priest who, although sympathetic to music, claimed no particular skill in it. As his power was in a different area – that of liturgy – I was not a threat. This brings us to the point that power is always specific to a particular situation and may well relate to a particular skill or discipline.

Another aspect of the prison context was that I was not seeking to merge traditions at all. The workshops were characterised and constructed around the *dùndún* drumming traditions and there were no other musical traditions involved. The *dùndún* was able to be itself and functioned freely at its will. I could, in this context, be an authentic *dùndún* practitioner and not have to work at the processes of negotiating my integrity while entering into a compromise with another tradition. For the duration of the workshop in the chapel, my power was unchallenged and I could be myself fully as a *dùndún* practitioner without the questions of identity that had plagued the church context. Once I had achieved an entry into the prison system, I had sole control of the power. I did not need to share it. Paradoxically, because of my position of power, I was able to share the power with the mates by entering into a process of empowerment through teaching them drumming skills.

Energy - the power and ability to be mentally and physically active - is central to the meaning of empowerment here. The mental ability is more psychological and reflects the ebb and flow of mates' perceptions about themselves in relation to the drumming activities and skills. For example, Ben said he felt he was no longer in the prison during the workshops. This is psychological empowerment as I have said in Chapter Five. The physical ability was not for the mates to break out from the prison, but to use their drumming skills to channel their

energy during the workshops. The *dùndún* was an anger-management device, as it gave the mates a strategy for handling difficult emotions.

In the church the musicians held on tightly to their ability to control the energy of the worship. In the prison, in a position where I had sole control, I was able to control the energy flow and disperse it among the mates. The power structure in the prison allowed the gatekeeper (the chaplain) to share power with me, which I eventually shared with the mates. In my experience, shared power enables empowerment, protected power leads to disempowerment.

The conclusion one might draw to the findings is that the complexity and the difficulty of recontextualising the *dùndún*, particularly in the two churches in this investigation, lay in what the drum represents – different culture, values, identity – and ultimately tied to these is power. The *dùndún* represented a different culture, value and identity. It also symbolised the voice of Yorùbá people. If it was integrated in the two churches, they might lose their identity and power.

6.2 Suggestions for further research

This exploration of the concepts reveals the complexity of the issues involved when a player of a particular tradition attempts to recontextualise his performance within a new environment. These need further exploration.

Several important areas arise from the interrelationship between tradition, originality and authenticity. One of these is the issue of authorship. There is substantial evidence that the Yorùbá have the authority over the *dùndún* in terms of its usage. However, the biggest

question is in its authorship as we have seen in various accounts in Chapter Two. The Yorùbá believe that Àyàn Àganlú, who hailed from Ìbàribáland created the *dùndún* and taught them the art of drumming. We can say that the *dùndún* is owned by the Ìbàribá.

However, the actual drum that Àyàn Àganlú is said to have taught the Yorùbá is still a mystery. This is another controversial area that needs exploring. One informant in Ilé-Ifè told me that the *gúdúgúdú* is more unique to the drummers than the *iyáàlù dùndún* and it is regarded as the oldest in terms of existence. This belief is also encapsulated in a Yorùbá proverb; *à ì gùn kó làidàgbà, gúdúgúdú kì í sojúgbà dùndún* (the fact that someone is not tall does not mean he is not old).

Metaphorically, this suggests that though *gúdúgúdú* is small or has a lesser role in the *dùndún* ensemble, it has been in existence long before the *iyáàlù dùndún*. This suggests to me that the *gúdúgúdú*⁴⁷ is probably the drum that Àyàn Àganlú created and eventually taught the Yorùbá in Saworo. If this is true we can say that the *iyáàlù dùndún* is a purely Yorùbá invention and therefore, they are the rightful owners of the drum. Sadly, scholars have not done much research about Àyàn Àganlú, and as long as this is not done, the controversy over the ownership of the *dùndún* and the type of drum that Àyàn Àganlú created and taught the Yorùbá will never be resolved.

A further study could examine the gender and special aspects of the *dùndún* tradition both as it evolves in Nigeria and also when it is moved to new cultural contexts. As I have discussed in Chapter Two, the arts of drumming amongst the Àyàn family are meant for male children.

⁴⁷ This is probably why the practitioners represent Àyàn Àganlú with a *gúdúgúdú* drum in their various shrines. According to one informant, this is why *gúdúgúdú* is never sold like other drums, you only possess it through inheritance. All my effort to get them to sell one *gúdúgúdú* to me was not successful even though I was ready to pay a huge amount of money.

The Yorùbá ritual drums are considered holy and sacred to the *Òrìsà*, and women are considered to be unclean during their monthly period. Therefore, to keep the sacredness of the ritual drum, women are told that their monthly period will dry up if they touch the drum. For them, bearing children is more important than playing drums, which is why they take the myth at face value. This myth is then extended to non-ritual drums such as the *dùndún*.

As Foucault observes, when a discourse like this is socially constructed, it takes away power from some people. This discourse was socially constructed by those who have power, and female descendants of the *Àyàn* and women generally are the victims. As a practitioner who wants to improve on his practice, I have played the *dùndún* with some girls from a school in Basingstoke before as part of a concert. I have also run a number of *dùndún* drumming workshops with some mature women before and there was no report of any incidents. Does it mean that the myth is peculiar to the Yorùbá women alone in Nigeria? What of the Yorùbá women in the UK? A new study could explore this further in Nigeria. Another is the possibility of replicating the study more widely in the UK or Europe.

Another issue concerns various aspects of my work in the prison context which can be explored further. I have laid claim to the fact that mates' personal empowerment was improved by the experience. One limitation in this investigation is that the drumming workshops in the prison had a set time frame and were centred on a particular prison rather than the whole prison system in England and Wales. The implications for other prisons were not explored. Furthermore, the mobility policy of the prison system and security issues did not give me the opportunity to monitor the development of the mates who took part in the workshops. I did not have access to those who have probably left the prison after serving their terms. Therefore, I have no way to know whether the skills the mates acquired during

the workshops empower them beyond the prison. Lastly, I was not able to monitor the discretionary empowerment on the part of the prison wardens that I suggested in Chapter Five.

The conclusion I want to draw in this case is that owing to the limited scope in this study, more rigorous research on this proposition may be necessary before any definite conclusion can be drawn on the issue of empowerment in the prison through drumming workshops.

A further concept arises from the area of construction of meaning and the role that Christianity played in colonial contexts and might potentially play in post-colonial contexts. In the church context, a number of issues emerged such as the open and closed nature of particular belief systems, the effects of the missionary activities of the church in Africa and how musical gradations are controlled in various denominations. I have worshipped in a church presided over by a Yorùbá priest in London, and the *dùndún* drums are part of their musical instruments. This is not to suggest that the *dùndún* can be easily integrated into any churches with Yorùbá priests. There are still many Yorùbá priests who object to the use of the *dùndún* in their churches in Nigeria. While it is possible to see a European priest who favours playing the *dùndún* in his church (like the prison chaplain), it is also possible to see a Yorùbá or an African priest in Europe who opposes this. Therefore, the idea will need to be tested in different churches before a conclusion can be drawn.

However, for the *dùndún* to be recontextualised in churches presided over by non-African priests in Europe, it is necessary for the church authority to see Christianity beyond the liturgical tradition of Europe and the image of the African cultures as portrayed by the colonial missionaries.

In the area of dialogue, understanding and integration lies the movement of natural materials from one part of the world to another with a different climate. There is still work to be done on the substitution of synthetic materials for the natural materials of the original culture. One area in which the *dùndún* was not able to demonstrate resilience was the weather. At two separate incidents involving the *dùndún* performance in Hampshire, two *ìyáàlu dùndún* drums were broken due to adverse weather conditions. Generally, European climate is a problem as a whole set of my *dùndún* and *bàtá* drums were also broken in Hungary. This makes the process of recontextualisation difficult.

Nonetheless, this problem can be solved by recontextualising the materials of the *dùndún*. This can be done in two ways, firstly rather than bringing the *dùndún* drums from Nigeria, one can carve the *dùndún* trunk out of a tree and also use the skin of an animal bred in a European nation where the *dùndún* is to be recontextualised. Since the tree and animal are already acclimatised, this can make the drum survive in the weather of that country, e.g. conga drums. This can also save time and energy and can be cost effective. This requires flexibility from a practitioner with a willingness to allow the *dùndún* to be made from materials different from the original ones. This is an area that I will be exploring when carrying out another project.

The second option has been explored and the *dùndún* has been made with synthetic material. The same thing can be done to all members of the *dùndún* and *gáangan* sub-family ensembles. This might make recontextualisation of the *dùndún* in the church possible because the drum will bear the imprint of European values and identity, which the church gatekeepers cherish.

The only problem with these two options is the sound. The two materials will probably affect the clarity of the drum and its role as a talking instrument. In terms of the first option, I have not made a *dùndún* from a tree or an animal bred abroad before, so I cannot say categorically the level at which the sound could be affected. However, reflecting on the talking drum presented to me by the director of the ‘Drum4Fun’ organisation, which I mentioned in Chapter One, this suggests to me that the drum may not be able to function as its name suggests it should. Having played the replica of the *dùndún* made from synthetic leather many times, I can say that the drum is only a talking drum by name and not by function. There is a further study waiting to be carried out here.

6.3. The *dùndún* and I

What have I learnt from this study as a reflective practitioner who engaged in Action Research methodology? I will reflect on this using the following; the role of preconceptions in a situation where new paradigms are emerging and the place of gatekeepers.

It was preconceptions that played a significant part in the dialogue of the deaf described above. Some of these were based on a colonial past and some on my own previous experience. In this investigation, preconception played a role in the outcome of the church case study both on my side and the church. As I have said in Chapter One, I had recontextualised the *dùndún* in the churches before in Nigeria and Hungary. The only place where I had not recontextualised the *dùndún* before was in the prison and this was the place where the *dùndún* had more positive reception. As I had no expectations of what might happen in the prison, I only had hopes and the paradigm for the workshop could emerge freely from my interactions with the mates. As a result of this the workshops were open to a variety of possibilities.

However, I had a fixed plan in the church and I did not allow the church context to allow new paradigms to emerge. My expectations were very high because of my previous experience of recontextualising the *dùndún* in Nigeria and Hungary. I was almost certain of the outcome even before I embarked on the project.

I had hoped that if I could succeed in recontextualising the *dùndún* in an Eastern European country such as Hungary that has no previous colonial history with Nigeria, I could succeed in Britain. I had thought that Britain already had adequate knowledge of the Yorùbá culture during the colonial time and with a large number of Yorùbá in Britain, the idea would be overwhelmingly received in Hampshire. It would appear that the two churches in Hampshire had preconceptions about the Yorùbá culture, which I think was because of the legacy of colonialism. What this teaches me is that cultural difference requires me to question continually the preconceptions I bring to any situation – where they have come from and how helpful or unhelpful they may be.

Power played a role in the two case studies, particularly in the role that the gatekeepers played in making the projects possible or impossible. While the gatekeeper in the prison was flexible and ready to share power, the church gatekeepers were not ready to share their power. The role played by gatekeepers in the acquisition and utilisation of information is crucial and I did not fully understand the importance of this role until these case studies. I did not have any effective gatekeepers in the two churches in Hampshire or their gatekeepers were not ready to cooperate with me. I had no prior information about the structure of the two churches and how they functioned.

I went to TCH as an egalitarian Christian assuming that my regular attendance would be enough to make them consider my idea. Matt, the band leader in the TCH, did not see any need in playing the *dùndún* as part of the church music. Though I went to the CCH through a friend, she did not have power to function as my gatekeeper, despite the fact that she was a Sunday school teacher in the church. In the choir, the real power was also vested in the hand of John, the band leader and not in Yemi's hand, the choir leader. In both churches, Matt and John were the gatekeepers for their churches and they were the people who stood between my idea and the church and actually kept their gates closed.

What are the characteristics of a gatekeeper who is likely to allow me into his/her space? The first is the willingness to enter into dialogue. The dialogue between the gatekeepers in the church and I was complex as it encompassed ideas of tradition and originality upon which we could not agree. This resulted in a dialogue of the deaf with no understanding and no possibility of integration.

The prison chaplain was both my gatekeeper and the prison's. We have already seen above how, by virtue of the very context in which he was working he had valuing of diversity as an important element rather than uniformity. This was both a personal and an organisational value for him. Because of his embracing of ideas in the restorative justice paradigm, he saw the presence of difference in the area of identity as potentially an agent of change for the mates for whom he was responsible. This valuing of diversity and difference made him a gatekeeper who was likely to open the gates of his space to me. As an insider, he acted on my behalf and had a number of meetings with the prison authority in Portsmouth. He fed me with all necessary information and met with the mates. He set the dates, made posters and put them in the prison and got the mates to sign up for the workshops. He arranged the

workshops to be held in the prison chapel and also stayed with us throughout the workshops. In future I will be able in initial dialogues to see more clearly the characteristics in potential gatekeepers that will make them likely or unlikely to allow me to perform in their space.

My work in Hampshire has increased my insight into the complexities involved in moving my practice from the culture in which I was born. The process of recontextualisation is very complex involving much time and insight. It is this insight that has been gained by this investigation. In the light of these observations, I have come to a conclusion that for successful recontextualisation to take place, four things are very important.

Firstly, a culture, an organisation or institution that is open to diversity and emergent rather than fixed paradigms is required. Secondly, the preconceptions of a particular culture need to be worked through, perhaps painfully. Thirdly, the willingness to share power on the part of all involved in the project can result in empowerment for everyone. Things are likely to work better if the gatekeepers can share power with the practitioners. Fourthly, the tradition will change as it enters a process of embodiment by people from a different culture, but that this may be regarded as a new form of authenticity. In this process new meanings will almost certainly emerge. This may represent a threat to my own identity which I need continually to be re-appraising.

Flexibility can help in the process of recontextualisation. I have also learnt to be flexible about my identity construction. This is why it is important for me to keep revisiting the spiral cycle of the Action Research, which I talked about in Chapter Three. This can enable me to be a better reflective practitioner, developing my practice in the complex climate of globalisation.

This piece of Action Research has affected my position and practice as a *dùndún* practitioner and researcher. It has caused me to be a more reflective practitioner and also made me more aware of the history of the *dùndún* in Yorùbá culture. I hope that this study will act as a springboard for other practitioners who may want to extend the contexts of their practice with insight and understanding.



Fig. 22. A broken *dùndún* drum in Budapest, Hungary



Fig. 23. Three broken drums in Budapest, Hungary



Fig. 24. Two broken *iyáàlù dùndún* drums in Winchester

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Appendix 1

Agreement and copies of consent forms

C/o Research & Knowledge Exchange Centre
University of Winchester
West Hill, Winchester,
Hampshire SO22 4NR

Dear Participant

I would like to take some pictures during the workshop/performance for the purposes of research and evaluation. I will only take your picture if you give me permission to do so. I will show you the pictures at the end of the day.

If you are willing for me to take your pictures, please sign the attached consent form.

Please feel free to discuss the project with me

Dennis Eluyefa

The University of Winchester

Picture Consent

I have read the information pack. I agree that my pictures can be taken for evaluation of the research project for the “Recontextualisation of the *dùndún* drumming tradition in Hampshire”.

I agree/do not agree to the use of my real name in the project (delete as appropriate).

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Interview Consent

I have read the information pack. I agree to be interviewed for evaluation of the research project for the “Recontextualisation of the *dùndún* drumming tradition in Hampshire”.

I agree/do not agree to the use of my real name in the project (delete as appropriate).

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Location:

Agreement

I have read the information pack. I agree to take part in the study “Recontextualisation of the *dùndún* drumming tradition in Hampshire”. I understand that I may withdraw from the project at any time and that information I give will be for research purposes only.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 2

A poster of the prison workshops

